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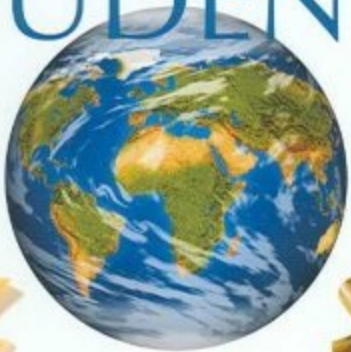

JEANNE JACOB
MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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THE WORLD COOKBOOK FOR STUDENTS

THE WORLD COOKBOOK FOR STUDENTS

VOLUME 1

Afghanistan to Cook Islands

JEANNE JACOB

MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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Angola
Angolan Grilled Pork (*Costeleta de Porco a Angolana*)
Chicken Stew (*Muamba de Galinha*)
Coconut Dessert (*Cocada Angolana*)
Fish with Vegetables (*Peixe Cocido com Verduras*)
Manioc Puree (*Pirão*)
Rice Soup (*Sopa do Arroz*)

Benin
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Greens with Sesame (*Gboman*)
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Pureed Peas
Red Paste (*Pâte Rouge*)

Botswana
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Mopane Worms
Pounded Meat (*Seswaa*)
Tomato Loofah
Tomato and Onion Relish

Burkina Faso
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Fish Stew with Vegetables (*Maan Nezim Nzedo*)
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Mango Chutney
Spiced Lamb Meatballs

Burundi
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Bean Soup (*Soup d'Haricot*)
Chicken-Flavored Wheat (*Boko Boko*)
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Plantains and Beans

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Egusi Sauce
Green Rice (*Riz Vert*)
Mashed Yams (*Foutou*)
Sweet Rice Porridge (*Bouiller*)

Chad
Cooked Okra (*Daraba*)
Fruit Juice (*Jus de Fruit*)
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Meat and Okra Sauce
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Southern Chad Peanut Sauce
Squash with Peanuts
Sweet Potato Salad

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Fish in Banana Leaf (*Liboké de Poisson*)
Mbika with Meat
Mushroom and Lemon Sauce (*Sauce aux Champignons et Citron*)
Wild Spinach in Palm Oil and Peanuts (*Fumbwa Elambanina Mafutaya Nguba*)

Congo, Republic of
Cassava Leaves (*Saka-Saka*)
Cassava Leaves and Beans (*Saka Madesu*)
Fish and Kale (*Mbisi Ye Kalou Na Loso*)
Fried Chicken with Peanut Butter Sauce
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Pepper Steak
Stuffed Leg of Lamb (*Mechoui*)

Mauritius
Chicken Stew (*Daube de Poulet*)
Chili Cakes (*Gateaux Piments*)
Choko Salad (*Salade Chou Chou*)
Cold Jelly Drink (*Alooda Glacée*)
Pancakes (*Faratas*)
Raspberry Cakes (*Napolitaines*)

Morocco
Almond Croissants (*Kab el Ghzal*)
Braised Chicken with Olives (*Tajine*)
Chicken with Chickpeas (*Gdra*)
Couscous Marrakech
Tomatoes and Eggs (*Chakchouka*)

Mozambique
Chicken Zambezia (*Galinha à Zambeziana*)
Clam and Peanut Stew (*Matata*)
Green Bean Soup (*Sopa de Feijao Verde*)
Hot Pepper Sauce, Mozambique Version (*Piri-Piri*)
Papaya and Egg Pudding (*Ovos Moles de Papaia*)

Namibia
Black-Eyed Peas (*Oshingali*)
Stiff Porridge Staple (*Oshifima*)
Veldt Bread

Niger
Fruit Salad
Lamb Gumbo with Wheat Dumplings (*Bondo Gumbo*)

Nigeria
Afang Soup
Bean Pudding (*Moimoi*)
Groundnut Chop
Millet Balls in Yogurt (*Fura da Nono*)
Nigerian Kebabs (*Suya*)
Plantain and Crayfish (*Kekefia*)
Prawn Meat with Coconut and Bulghur

Rwanda
Beef Stew
Cassava Leaves and Eggplant (*Isombe*)
Fried Plantains (*Mizuzu*)

São Tomé e Príncipe
Banana Puree (*Angu de Banana*)
Creole Rice (*Riz Crioulo*)
Fish Stew (*Calulu de Peixe*)
Fried Papaya (*Mamão Frito*)
Sweet Potato Omelet (*Omeleta com Batata Doce*)
Sweet Potato Soufflé (*Soufflé de Batata Doce*)

Senegal
Barbecued Chicken with Lemon and Onions (*Poulet Yassa à la Casamance*)
Festive Dish for New Year (*Le Thiéré Bassi*)
Fish Balls (*Boulettes*)
Fritters (*Beignets*)
Peanut and Meat Stew (*Mafé*)
Senegalese Milk Drink (*Sow*)
Sweet Porridge (*Ngalakh*)
White Fish on Black-Eyed Peas Appetizer (*L'Assiette des Assiettes*)

Seychelles
Fish Stew (*Bouillon de Poisson*)
Flavored Rice (*Pulao*)
Grilled Fish
Plantains in Coconut Milk (*Daube de Banane Plantain*)
Pork Curry (*Cari de Porc*)
Seychelles Fish Curry (*Cari de Poisson*)
Spice Mix (*Massalé*)
Sweet Potato Dessert (*La Daube Patate*)
Tuna in Turmeric and Coconut Milk (*Thon au Safran*)

Sierra Leone
Banana Fritters
Bean Fritters (*Binch Akara*)
Corned Beef Cakes
Fish Packets (*Abala*)
Groundnut Stew
Peanut Squares (*Kanya*)
Prawn Palava

Somalia
Chicken *Suqaar*
Meat Pies (*Sambusa*)
Papaya Rings
Spiced Mangoes
Spiced Meat and Rice (*Bariis isku Dhex-Karis*)
Veal with Tomato Topping (*Huris Hilib*)

South Africa
Cape Malay Pickled Fish (*Ingelegde Vis*)
Corn Bread (*Mielie Brood*)
Koeksisters
Marinated Skewered Meat (*Sosaties*)
Minced Meat Casserole (*Bobotie*)
Sorrel Soup
Yellow Rice (*Geelrys*)

Sudan
Cassava Fritters (*Tamiya*)
Cinnamon Tea
Jute Mallow Soup (*Molokhiya*)
Meatballs (*Koftah*)
Peanut Soup (*Shorba*)
Preacher's Okra (*Mullah Bamyah*)
Sorghum Crepes (*Kisra*)
Spicy Relish (*Shata*)
Stuffed Tomato (*Bandoora Machschi*)
Yogurt and Cucumber Salad (*Salatet Zabady bil Ajur*)

Swaziland
Avocado, Radish, Peanut, and Ginger Salad (*Slaai*)
Beef, Cabbage, and Samp Stew (*Sidlwadlwa*)
Carrot and Green Bean Soup (*Indlangala*)
Cornmeal Pancakes
Maize Bread (*Mealie Bread*)
Pumpkin Soup
Samp and Beans with Nuts
Spinach Porridge (*Isijabane*)
Sugar Bean Porridge (*Sishwala*)

Tanzania
Coconut Fish Curry (*Samaki wa Nazi*)
Cooked Bananas (*Ndizi na Nyama*)
Meat and Bulghur (*Boko-Boko*)
Pigeon Peas in Coconut Milk (*Mbaazi wa Nazi*)
Plantain and Beef Stew (*Mtori*)
Rice and Lentils (*Mseto*)
Rice Pancakes (*Vitumbua*)
Sweet Balls in Vanilla Syrup (*Kaimati*)

Sweet Red Beans (*Maharagwe*)
Vegetable Relish (*Kachumbali*)

Togo
Cassava and Egg (*Gari Foto*)
Grilled Plantain
Groundnut Stew with Chicken
Roast Chicken with *Djenkoumé* (*Poulet Djenkoumé*)
Seafood, Beef, and Vegetable Sauce
Sweet Cassava Dessert (*Gari Dossi*)

Tunisia
Almond and Sesame Pastries (*Samsa*)
Braised Beef and Olives (*Mirket Zeitun*)
Governor's *Chakchouka* (*Chakchoukat al Pekha*)
Lamb and Quince Stew (*Mirket al Safarjal*)
Pepper Sauce (*Harissa*)
Semolina Cereal (*Farka*)
Tunisian Salad (*Slata Tunisia*)

Uganda
Breakfast Porridge (*Obungi Bwa Kalo*)
Chicken Stew
Coconut-Peanut Brittle (*Kashata*)
Groundnut Sauce
Matoke I (Plain)
Matoke II (Fancy)
Royal Steamed Packets (*Oluwombo*)
Spinach and *Simsim*
Vegetable Casserole

Zambia
Fish Stew
Fried Plantains
Green *Mealie* Loaf
Greens in Peanut Sauce (*Ifisashi*)
Meat and Corn Pie (*Mealie Tart*)
Okra Soup

Zanzibar
Banana Custard (*N'dizi na Kasted*)
Cashew Nut and Sweet Potato Cakes
Fish Croquettes (*Samaki Wa Kusonga*)
Fruit and Coconut Drink (*Maji ya Matunda na Nazi*)
Ground Beef Curry (*Mchuzi wa Kima*)
Hot Ginger Drink (*Tangawizi*)
Zanzibar *Pilau*

Zimbabwe
Chicken in Peanut Sauce (*Huku ne Dovi*)
Cooked Greens Zimbabwe Style
Fermented Millet Porridge (*Amboli*)
Nhopi Dovi with Cornmeal (*Sadza*)
Pumpkin with Peanut Sauce (*Nhopi Dovi*)
Squash and Apple Soup
Zimbabwe Fruit Custard

ASIA

Afghanistan
Chicken and Chickpea Stew with Rice (*Nakhod Chalau*, also *Chelo Nachodo*)
Eggplant with Yogurt Sauce (*Bouranee Baunjan*, also *Burani Bonjon*)
Fudge (*Sheer Payra*)
Potato and Meat Packets (*Boulanee*)
Rosewater Custard (*Firnee*)

Bangladesh
Apple Halwa
Chicken Jalfrezi
Chicken Kebabs (*Reshmi Kabab*)
Fish in Mustard Sauce (*Sorse Bata Diya Maach*)
Mixed Vegetables (*Masala Subzi*)
Sweetened Yogurt (*Mishti Doi*)

Bhutan
Bhutanese Salsa (*Eze*, also *Esay*)
Buckwheat Dumplings (*Hapai Hantue*)
Minced Chicken (*Jasha Maroo*)
Pork Noodles (*Fing*)
Potatoes in Cheese Sauce (*Kewa Datshi*)

Brunei
Chicken Stew with Toasted Coconut (*Serunding Padang*)
Coconut Cassava Cake (*Getuk Lindri*)
Rice with Coconut Milk (*Nasi Lemak*)
Spicy Anchovies (*Sambal Ikan Bilis*)
Vegetable Curry (*Sayur Lodeh*)

Cambodia
Coconut Fish Curry Parcels (*Amok Trei*)
Grilled Sesame Chicken (*Sach Moan Ang La Ngor*)
Jackfruit Muffins (*Num Tnor*)
Pumpkin and Pork Meatball Soup (*Samlor La Pov Sach Chrouk*)
Sweet Dipping Sauce (*Tirk Sa-Ieu Chu P'em*)
Vegetarian Pancakes (*Num Ta Leng Sap*)

China
Barbecued or Roast Pork (*Cha Shao*)
Crisp-Soft Noodles with Pork and Vegetables (*Liang Mian Huang*)
Diced Chicken with Walnuts (*Tao Ren Ji Ding*)
Dry Cooked Green Beans (*Kan Pien Ssu Chi Tou*)
Fruit-Filled Watermelon (*Shi Jin Guo Pin*)
Hot Pot (*Huoguo*)
Ma Po's Bean Curd (*Ma Bo Dou Fu*)
Paper-Wrapped Chicken (*Ji Bao Ji*)
Sesame Chicken Salad (*Bang Bang Ji*)
Smoked Chicken Beijing Style (*Xun Ji*)
Steamed Buns with Barbecued Pork Filling (*Cha Shao Pao*, *Cha Siu Bao*)
Steamed Sponge Cake (*Ma La Kao*)
Stir-Fried Chinese Cabbage
Sweet Peanuts
Sweet Potatoes in Syrup
Tomato and Egg Soup (*Xi Hong Shi Ji Dan Tang*)

India
Carrot Halva
Cauliflower and Potatoes (*Gobi Aloo*)

Chicken Curry (*Rasedaar Murghi Taangen*)
Mango Ice Cream (*Aam Ki Kulfi*, also *Aam Kulfi*)
Spiced Scrambled Egg (*Ekuri*)
Spiced Skewered Meat (*Tikka Kebab*)
Spice Mix (*Garam Masala*)
Vegetables in Coconut Sauce (*Aviyal*)
Yogurt Sharbat (*Meethi Sharbat*)

Indonesia
Chicken Stew (*Opor Ayam*)
Coconut-filled Pancake Rolls (*Dadar Gulung*)
Fried Beef Dumplings (*Pangsit*)
Fried Chili and Tomato Sauce (*Sambal Tomat Tumis*)
Fried Rice (*Nasi Goreng*)
Mixed Fruit Drink (*Es Teler*)
Pork Stewed in Sweet Soy Sauce (*Be Celeng Base Manis*)
Spicy Meat and Coconut Burger (*Rempah*)
Spinach or Watercress Soup (*Sop Bayam Jahe*)
Vegetables and Bean Curd in Black Bean Sauce (*Sayur Taucho*)

Japan
Beef and Rice Bowl (*Gyūdon*, also *Gyūniku Donburi*)
Cabbage Pickle (*Kyabetsu no Tsukemono*)
Cheesecake (*Chīzu Kēki*)
Fruit Ice (*Kōri*)
Grilled Skewered Chicken (*Yakitori*)
Pearl Onions in Walnut *Miso* Salad Dressing (*Kotamanegi no Kurumi Miso Ae*)
Rice Omelet (*Omuraisu*)
Savory Custard Soup (*Chawan Mushi*)

Kazakhstan
Flavored Rice (*Plov* or *Pilav*)
Kazakh Cereal Bar (*Zhent*)
Kazakh Tea (*Chai*)
Noodles with Meat Sauce (*Kespe*)
Radish Salad (*Shalgam*)
Steamed Carrot Roll (*Zhuta*)
Stuffed Dumplings (*Manty*)
Sweet Fritters (*Domalak Baursak*)

Korea
Barbecued Short Ribs (*Kalbi-gui*, also *Galbi-gui*)
Cucumber Salad (*Oi Namul*)
Noodles and Beef (*Chapjae*, also *Japchae*)
Three-Color Dumplings (*Samsaekchuak*)
Vegetable and Beef Rice Bowl (*Bibimbap*)
Vinegar and Hot Pepper Sauce (*Chojang*)

Kyrgyzstan
Baked Beef
Kyrgyz Tea (*Atkanchay*)
Mutton-on-the-Bone (*Beshbarmak*)
Mutton Soup (*Shorpo*)
Noodle Soup (*Kesme*)

Laos
Fish with Coconut Milk (*Sousi Pa*)
Green Papaya Salad (*Tam Mak Houng*)
Sticky Rice (*Khao Neow*)
Sticky Rice and Mango (*Khao Nieow Ma Muang*)
Stir-Fried Chicken (*Aioan Chua Noeung Phset Kretni*)
Vegetable Stew (*or Phak*)

Malaysia
Fried Noodles with Seafood (*Char Kuay Teow*, also *Char Kuoi Teow*)
Meat Pastries (*Murtabak, Murtaba*, also *Martaba*)
Mixed Fruit Salad (*Rojak Buah*)
Red-Cooked Chicken (*Ayam Masak Merah*)
Sweet Coconut Rice Balls (*Onde Onde*)

Maldives
Beef Curry (*Geri Riha*)
Custard Cream Sweet (*Bis Haluvaa*)
Deep-Fried Fish (*Theluli Mas*)
Fish and Potato Croquettes (*Cutlus*)
Flavored Rice (*Kaliyaa Birinjee*)
Gourd Relish (*Chichandaa Satani*)
Onion Flat Bread (*Fiyaa Roshi*)
Potato Curry (*Kukulhu Bis Riha*)

Mongolia
Baked Lamb (*Khorkhog*, also *Horhog*)
Deep-Fried Fritters (*Boortsog*)
Fried Meat Pies (*Khoorshoor*, also *Huurshuur*)
Mutton Soup (*Guriltai Shul*)
Steamed Meat-Filled Dumplings (*Buuz*)

Myanmar (Burma)
Coconut Milk with Sago (*Moh Let Saung*)
Ginger Salad (*Gin Thoke*)
Gourd Fritters (*Boothee Kyaw*)
Shrimp Paste Relish (*Balachaung, Ngapi Kyaw*)
Wheat Noodles in Coconut Chicken Soup (*Ohn-no-kauk-swey*)

Nepal
Black Lentil Fritters (*Bara*, also *Badha*)
Cheese Sweets (*Peda*)
Chicken Curry (*Bhutuwa*)
Chickpea-Flour Cookies (*Besan Burfi*)
Mint Chutney (*Babari Ko Achaar*)
Vegetable Noodles (*Thukpa*)

Pakistan
Eggplant in Yogurt Sauce (*Bengan ka Bhurta*)
Meatballs (*Koftay*)
Milk Balls (*Ras Goolay*, also *Rasgula*)
Spiced Braised Meat (*Nihari*)
Stir-Fried Spicy Chicken (*Jalfraizi*)

Palestine
Chicken in Sumac (*Musakhan*)
Eggplant with *Tahina* (*M'tabbal*)
Grilled Vegetable Paste (*Mafghoussa*)

Jerusalem Cheese Vermicelli Dessert (*Kadayif al Khouds*)
Wild Mallows (*Khubbeizeh*)

Philippines
Beefsteak (*Bistek*)
Fresh Egg Rolls (Fresh *Lumpia*)
Rice Cake (*Bibingka*)
Savory Fritters (*Ukoy*)
Sour Soup (*Sinigang*)

Singapore
Chicken Rice (*Hainan Ji Fan*)
Coconut Rice (*Nasi Lemak*)
Fried Noodles (*Mee Goreng*)
Peanut Pancake (*Ban Jian Kway*)
Steamed Fish Cake (*Otak-Otak*)
Sweet Potato Porridge (*Bubur Chacha*)

Sri Lanka
Coconut Custard (*Wattalappam*)
Coconut *Sambol* (*Pol Sambol*)
Cutlets (*Cutlus*)
Egg Curry
Milk Rice (*Kiribath*)
Yogurt and Treacle (*Kiri Pani*)

Taiwan
Beef Noodle Soup (*Niurou Mian*, also *Gu Bah Mi*)
Chafing Dish Tofu (*Tie Ban Dou Fu*)
Fried Rice (*Chao Fan*)
Pineapple Tarts (*Feng Li Su*)
Three-Cup Chicken (*San Bei Ji*)

Tajikistan
Flavored Rice (*Oshi Plov*, *Palov*, *Osh*)
Halva (*Khalvo*)
Mutton and Vegetable Stew (*Mastoba*)
Onion-Flavored Flat Bread (*Non*)
Tajik Salty Milk Tea (*Chai*)
Tomatoes, Sour Cream, and Bread (*Shakarov*)

Thailand
Chiang Mai–Style Curry Noodles (*Kao Soi*)
Chicken Curry (*Gaeng Gari Gai*)
Hot and Sour Soup with Prawns (*Tom Yam Goong*)
Vegetables in Coconut Milk (*Paak Tom Kati*)
Water Chestnut Rubies (*Tab Tim Grob*)

Tibet
Barley Flour Paste (*Tsampa*)
Butter Tea (*Po Cha*, *Bo Cha*)
Cheese Soup (*Churu*)
Mixed Vegetable Stew (*Shamday*, *Shamdhe*)
Rice Pudding (*Desi*, *Deysee*)
Steamed Filled Dumplings (*Momo*)
Tibetan Curry Spice Mix (*Garam Masala*)

Turkmenistan
Boiled Soup (*Chektyrma*)
Flavored Rice (*Palav*, *Plov*)
Fried Soup (*Shorba*)
Glazed Fritters (*Shakshak*, *Chakchak*)
Meat Pie (*Ishlekly*, *Ishlekli*)
Potato Salad

The Uighurs
Boiled Meat Dumplings (*Chuchura*, *Ququra*)
Deep-Fried Dough Twists (*Sanzi*)
Flavored Rice (*Polo*)
Pancake (*Nang*)
Pumpkin or Squash Sweet (*Kawa*)

Uzbekistan
Apricot Seed Brittle (*Magiz Kholva*)
Cabbage Soup (*Karam Shurva*)
Cheese-Stuffed Sweet Peppers (*Lazzat Salat*)
Flavored Rice (*Palov*)
"Sausage" *Kebab* (*Liula Kebab*)
Sweet Porridge (*Kholvaitar*)
Tart Kebab Sauce
Yogurt Drink (*Airon*)

Vietnam
Caramel Sauce (*Nuoc Mau*)
Caramel-Simmered Pork Ribs (*Suon Kho*)
Coconut Caramel Flan (*Banh Dua Ca Ra Men*)
Garlic Fish Sauce (*Nuoc Mam Cham*)
Hue Rice (*Com Huong Giang*)
Rainbow Drink (*Che Ba Mau*)
Vietnamese Crepes (*Banh Xeo*)

THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTH AMERICA

Antigua and Barbuda
Baked Bananas
Cornmeal Balls or Loaf (*Fungee*)
Curried Chicken Salad
Dumplins
Pepper Pot
Pineapple Chicken Soup

Bahamas
Carrot Pudding
Crab 'n Rice
Creamy Baked Cabbage
Ground Nut Soup
Orange and Coriander Pork

Barbados
Banana and Sweet Potato Casserole
Green Sauce
Jug-jug
Pickled Fish
Pineapple Orange Sherbet

Belize
Chicken and Pork Stew (*Chimole*)
Corn Parcels (*Ducunu*, *Dukunu*)
Johnnycakes
Potato Pound
Rice and Beans

Bermuda
Banana Meat Loaf
Bermuda Fish Chowder
Bermudian Puree
Pawpaw (Papaya) Flan
Stuffed Bermuda Onions

Canada
Grandfathers (*Grandpères*)
Inuit Fry Bread (*Assaleeak*)
Meat Pie (*Tourtière*)
Nanaimo Bar
Pea Soup
Pork Buns
Potatoes and Cheese with Gravy (*Poutine*)
Tuna à la King

Costa Rica
Cabbage, Cucumber, and Tomato Salad (*Ensalada*)
Coconut Chicken (*Pollo en Coco*)
Corn Cake (*Pastel de Maíz*)
Fried Plantain (*Patacones*)
Potato Slices (*Gallitos de Papa*)
Rice and Beans (*Gallo Pinto*)

Cuba
Corn Soup (*Sopa de Maíz*)
Lemon-Anise Flan (*Flan de Limón*)
Papaya, Pepper, and Avocado Salad (*Ensalada Mixta*)
Pork Chops (*Chuletas*)
Red Beans (*Frijoles*)

Dominica
Avocado Drink
Banana Cake
Carrot and Christophene Casserole
Curried Green Figs
Dumplings or Bakes
Smothered Chicken
Stew (*Sancoche*)

Dominican Republic
Dreamy Orange Juice (*Morir Soñando*)
Mashed Plantains or Cassava (*Mangú*)
Potato Salad Russian Style (*Ensalada Rusa*)
Scrambled Eggs Dominican Style (*Revoltillo de Huevos*)
Steak and Onions (*Filete Encebollado*)

El Salvador
Cheese Cake (*Quesadilla*)
Chicken Tomato Stew (*Pollo Entomatado*)
Garlic Sausage Soup (*Sopa de Chorizo*)
Pickled Cabbage (*Curtido*)
Savory Pastries (*Pupusa*)

Grenada
Cinnamon Fried Bananas
Corn and Black Bean Salad
Oil-Down
Roast Pork
West Indies Plum Pudding

Guatemala
Chicken in Green Sauce (*Jocon*)
Chocolate-Coffee (*Champurrado*)
Potato and Green Bean Salad (*Iguashte*)
Radish Salad (*Salada de Rabano*)
Warm Fruit Salad (*Ponche de Frutas*)

Haiti
Fried Plantains (*Bananes Pesées*)
Fruit Cocktail Jelly (*Blanc Manger*)
Meat and Eggplant Skewers
Plantain Puree (*Bouillie de Banane et Plantain*)
Pumpkin Soup (*Soup Joumou* or *Soupe Giraumon*)

Honduras
Banana Porridge (*Letu*)
Chicken Stewed in Coconut Milk (*Tapado de Pollo*)
Date and Nut Cake (*Queque de Datiles con Nueces*)
Milk and Cinnamon Rice (*Arroz con Leche*)
Plantain Turnovers (*Tortas de Plátano*)

Jamaica
Coffee Ice Cream
Corned Beef Scotch Eggs
Festival
Jamaica Ginger and Apple Drink
Jerk Burger
Jerk Seasoning

Mexico
Avocado, Orange, and Radish Salad (*Ensalada de Aguacate con Naranja y Rábanos*)
Banana and Nut Dessert (*Torta de Plátanos y Nueces*)
Beef Roullades with Green Mole (*Bistec Relleno con Mole Verde*)
Hot Sandwiches (*Pambazos*)
Oaxacan-Style Lentils (*Lentejas Oaxaqueñas*)

Nicaragua
Bean Soup (*Sopa de Frijoles*)
Candied Mango (*Almíbar de Mango*)
Grilled Steak (*Carne Asada*)
Pineapple and Rice Drink (*Horchata con Piña*)
Young Corn and Cheese Dumplings (*Yoltamales*)

Panama
Candied Plantain (*Tentación*)
Cassava Fritters (*Carimañolas*)
Chicken and Vegetable Stew (*Sancocho*)
Papaya-Pineapple Drink (*Chicha de Papaya con Piña*)
Rice and Chicken (*Arroz con Pollo*)

St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Codfish Cakes
Dumplings
Honey-Baked Plantain Rolls
Pea Soup
Stuffed Cucumbers

Trinidad and Tobago
Banana Nut Pudding
Coconut Bake
Latterday Saints
Orange Rice
Stewed Chicken

United States of America
Butter Pecan Praline Ice Cream
Cheese Meat Loaf
Chocolate Fudge Upside-Down Cake
Fried Chicken
Fudge Brownies
Relish
Sour Milk Pancakes

EUROPE

Albania
Bean Soup (*Jahni*)
Chicken with Walnuts (*Pule me Arra*)
Cookies in Syrup (*Sheqerpare*)
Fried Meatballs (*Qofte te Ferguara*)
Tirana Fergese with Peppers

Andorra
Cabbage and Potatoes (*Trinxat*)
Codfish and Vegetables (*Esgueixada*)

Cream Roll (*Braç de Gitano*)
Tomato Bread (*Pa amb Tomàquet*)

Armenia
Armenian Pilaf (*Prinzov Pilaf*)
Fried Cheese Turnovers (*Dabgadz Banir Boerag*)
New Year Pudding (*Anushabur*)
Peanut Butter–Stuffed Wheat Balls (*Baki Koufta*)
Sautéed Lamb (*Kalajosh*)
Toasted Pumpkin Seeds (*Tutumi Gud*)

Austria
Bacon Dumplings (*Speckknoedel*)
The Kaiser's Hunting Vittles (*Kaisers Jagdproviant*)
Mish-Mash (*Hoppel Poppel*)
Paprika Cheese Spread (*Liptauer*)
Potato Dumplings (*Kartoffelknoedel*)
Vanilla Cookies (*Vanille Kipferl*)

Azerbaijan
Dumpling Soup (*Dyushbara*)
Fat Mutton Kebab (*Lyulya Kebab*)
Flavored Rice (*Plov*)
Fruit Pilaf (*Shirin Pilau*)
Rose Petal Drink (*Ovshala*)
Stuffed Pancakes (*Kutaby*)
Yogurt and Green Soup (*Dovga*)

The Basques
Almond Drink or Sauce (*Intxaursalsa*)
Bilbao Fried Vegetables (*Pisto a la Bilbaina*)
Leek and Potato Soup (*Porrusalda*)
Stewed Salt Cod (*Bacalao a la Biscaina*)
Sweet Apple Soufflés

Belarus
Belarusian Tea (*Chai*)
Christmas Barley Porridge (*Kuccia*)
Country Salad
Cranberry Dessert (*Kisiel*)
Fried Meatballs (*Bitotski*)
Meat and Sausage Stew (*Machanka*)
Potato Balls (*Komes*)
Turnip Soup (*Borshch*)

Belgium
Cream of Watercress Soup (*Potage au Cresson*)
Eggs and Leeks (*Hachis de Poireaux*)
Flemish-Style Pork Chops (*Côtes de Porc à la Flamande*)
"French" Fries (*Pommes Frites*) with Mayonnaise
Fried Fish Balls (*Beignets de Poissons*)
Ghent Cheesecake (*Plattekaastarte*)

Bosnia and Herzegovina
Beg's Soup
Meat Sauce Banja Luka Style (*Banja Luka Chevap*)
Sausage and Beans (*Grah*)

Bulgaria
Bean Puree (*Papula*)
Mixed Stew (*Papazyaniya*)
Okra Salad (*Bamia Saladi*)
Sweet Vermicelli Noodles (*Kadaif*)

Chechnya
Beef and Potato Salad (*Vainakh Saladi*)
Nettle-Stuffed Pancakes (*Kholtmash*)
Pumpkin Tarts (*Khingalsh*)
Small Meat Pies (*Chuda*)
Steamed Mutton Stew (*Adzhabsanda*)

Croatia
Cod Fish Salad (*Bakalar*)
Dalmatian Fritters (*Franjki; Krostule; Hrostule; Krustule*)
Eggplant Dip (*Ajvar*)
Pancakes with Cottage Cheese (*Palacinke sa Sirom*)
Potato Soup Zagorje Style (*Zagorska Juha od Krumpira*)

Cyprus
Chard Rice (*Seskoulorizo*)
Cinnamon and Honey Fritters (*Loukoumades*)
Fried Liver (*Sikotaki Afelia*)
Oven-Baked Lamb (*Kleftiko*)
Stuffed Vine Leaves (*Koupepia*)

Czech Republic
Bean Goulash with Beef (*Fazolovy Gulas s Hovezim Masem*)
Chicken Cooked in Paprika (*Chicken Paprikash*)
Cold Blueberry Soup (*Boruvkova Polevka Studena*)
Fruit Pies (*Kolaches*)
Kohlrabi with Eggs and Ham (*Brukve s Vejci a Sunkou*)
Sandwiches (*Chlebicky*)

Denmark
Danish-Style Hamburgers (*Dansk Bøf med Løg*)
Farmgirl's Potatoes (*Bondepiges Kartofler*)
Fish Pudding (*Fiskebudding*)
Flour Dumplings (*Melboller*)
Green Pea Soup (*Grønærtesuppe*)
Open-Faced Sandwiches (*Smørrebrød*)

Estonia
Beef and Cabbage (*Hakkliha Ja Kapsa Pajatoit*)
Cucumber and Sour Cream Salad (*Agurkai Su Rukcscia Grietne*)
Fried Herring in Onion Sauce (*Silke Cepts Ar Sipoli Merce*)
Fried Potato Patties (*Bulviu Maltiniai*)
Raspberry Pastries (*Aleksander Torte*)
Red Cabbage with Sour Cream Sauce (*Porskinti Raudoni Kapustai*)

Finland
Blueberry Tart (*Mustikkapiirakka*)
Carrot Bake (*Porkkana-laattikko*)
Kainuu Fish Soup (*Kainuulainen Kalakeitto*)
Lingonberry Dessert (*Marjakiisseli*)
Meatballs (*Lihapullat*)
Mushroom Salad (*Suomalainen Sienisalaatti*)
Oven Porridge (*Uunipuuro*)

Salmon in Dill Sauce (*Lohi Tilli-kastikkeessa*)
Sweet Buns (*Pikkupullat*)

France
Baked Eggs (*Oeufs Mornay*)
Braised Vegetables from Provence (*Ratatouille*)
Buckwheat Savory Crêpes from Brittany (*Galettes Complètes*)
Egg and Cheese Sandwich (*Croque Monsieur*)
"Good Woman" Vegetable Soup (*Potage Bonne Femme*)
Ham with Cream Sauce (*Jambon à la Crème*)
Lyon-Style Potatoes (*Pommes Lyonnais*)
Mushrooms in Garlic (*Champignons à l'Ail*)
Nice-Style Fish and Fresh Vegetable Salad (*Salade Niçoise*)
Onion Tart (*Tarte à l'Oignon*)
Three-flavor Baked Custard (*Petits Pots de Crème*)

Georgia
Apple Preserves (*Samotkhis Vashlis Muraba*)
Dumplings (*Khinkali*)
Grape-and-Walnut Candies (*Chuchkella*)
Herb Mix (*Khmeli-suneli*)
Hot Relish (*Adzhika*)
Kidney Beans in Plum Sauce (*Lobio Tkemalit*)
Liver with Pomegranate Juice (*Ghvidzli*)
Plum Sauce (*Tkemali*)

Germany
Apple Pancakes (*Apfelpfannkuchen*)
Asparagus in White Sauce (*Spargel in Weisser Sosse*)
Green Eggs (*Grüner Eier*)
Herring Salad (*Heringsalat*)
Roast Chicken Stew (*Braunes Gefluegelragout*)
Stewed Red Cabbage (*Gedunsteter Rotkohl*)
Warm Potato Salad (*Warmer Kartoffelsalat*)
White Bean Soup (*Weisse Bohnensuppe*)

Greece
Baked Vegetables (*Lathero Fayi*)
Chicken Casserole
Eggs and Tomatoes (*Avga Matia me Saltsa Domatas*)
Jam Layer Cookies (*Biscota Thipla Me Marmelada*)
Meatballs with Lemon Sauce (*Keftedes me Avgolemono Saltsa*)
Stuffed Tomatoes (*Domates Yemistes*)
Twisted Loaf and Rolls (*Koulouria to Koulourakia*)

Hungary
Chilled Sour Cherry Soup (*Hideg Meggyleves*)
Highwaymen's Dumpling Soup (*Mecseki Betyárgombócleves*)
Peasant's Salad from Bugac (*Bugaci Paraszt-saláta*)
Stuffed Chicken (*Töltött Csirke*)
Tomato and Sweet Pepper Sauce (*Lecsó*)
Walnut Bread for Christmas (*Diós Kalács*)

Iceland
Caramelized Potatoes (*Brúnadthar Kartöflur*)
Egg Soup (*Eggjamjólk*)
Icelandic Fish Balls (*Fiskibollur*)
Lamb Pâté (*Lambakæfa*)
Lamb Stew (*Kjötsúpa*)
Rhubarb Jam (*Rabarbarasulta*)
Wedded Bliss Cake (*Hjónabandssæla*)

Ireland (Eire)
Boiled Smothered Pork and Cabbage
Cod Cobbler
Colcannon
Irish Stew
Potato Pie Dessert

Italy
Basic Corn Mush (*Polenta*)
Coffee Ice Cream (*Gelato di Caffe*)
Deviled Chicken (*Pollo alla Diavola*)
Fettuccine with Butter and Cream (*Fettuccine Al Burro*)
Iced Tea (*Té con Granita*)
Marinated Zucchini (*Concia*)
Seasoned Cutlets (*Piccata*)
Tuscan Bean Soup (*Zuppa Fagioli alla Toscana*)

Latvia
Cranberry Pudding (*Biguzis*)
Pea Patties
Potato and Carrot Pies (*Sklandu Rausi*)
Potato Salad (*Rasols*)
Sauerkraut Soup (*Skâbu Kâpostu Zupa*)
Sweet Porridge (*Buberts*)

Liechtenstein
Beef Soup with Liver Dumplings (*Leber Knödelsuppe*)
Meatball Sandwich (*Frikadellen Broetchen*)

Lithuania
Herring in Sour Cream (*Grietinîje Virta Silkê*)
Mushrooms in a Blanket (*Kepti Grybai Tedthloje*)
Onions Stuffed with Beets (*Burokëliais Ádaryti Svogûnai*)
Pork Cooked in Buttermilk (*Rûgusiame Piene Virta Kiauliena*)
Zeppelins or Stuffed Dumplings (*Cepelinai*)

Luxembourg
Buckwheat Dumplings (*Staerzelen*)
Fried Moselle Fish (*Friture de la Moselle*)
Green Bean Soup (*Bou'neschlupp*)
Ham in Hay (*Haam am Hée*)
Plum Tart (*Quetscheflued*)
Potato Fritters (*Gromperekichelcher*)

Macedonia
Cucumber Salad (*Tarator*)
Eggplant Salad (*Pindzhur*)
Meatballs (*Kjoftinja*)
Rice Pudding (*Sutlijash*)
Stuffed Peppers (*Polneti Piperki*)

Malta
Easter Cookies (*Figolli*)
Fish Soup (*Aljotta*)

Meat Loaf (*Pulpettun*)
Spicy Bean Mash (*Bigilla*)
Stuffed Eggplant (*Bringiel Mimli*)

Moldova
Cheese Crepes (*Placinte Poale'n Brau, Placinte cu Poale in Briu*)
Fried Pepper Salad (*Salata de Ardei Prajiti*)
Jellied Chicken
Moldavian Burgers (*Parjoale Moldovenesti*)
New Potatoes (*Cartofi Noi*)

Monaco
Almond and Melon Pie (*Galapian*)
Chickpea Cakes (*Socca*)
Fried Dumplings (*Barbagnian, Barba-juan*)
Olive Oil-Caper Paste (*Tapenade*)
Stuffed Vegetables with Tuna and Sardines (*Petits Farcis Thon et Sardines*)

Montenegro
Balchic-Style Baked Meat (*Balshica Tava*)
Fried Dumplings (*Malisorske Priganice*)
Pashtrovic-Style Macaroni (*Pashtrovski Makaruli*)
Potato Porridge (*Mocani Kacamak*)
Stuffed Kale (*Japraci*)
Vegetable Spread (*Pindzur*)

The Netherlands
Beans with Apples and Pork (*Bruine Bonen met Appels en Spek*)
Brussels Sprouts and Chestnuts (*Spruitjes met Kastanjes*)
Chocolate Hail (*Hagelslag*)
Custard Pudding (*Vla*)
Green Pea Soup (*Erwtensoep*)
Meat Croquettes (*Kroket*)
Speculaas

Norway
Creamed Rice
Fishballs (*Fiskeboller*)
Meldal Soup (*Meldalsodd*)
Pickled Herring (*Sursild*)
Potato Dumplings (*Klubb*)
Pot Roast (*Slottsstek*)

Poland
Cabbage with Apples (*Kapusta z Jablkamy*)
Christmas Porridge (*Kutia Wigilijna*)
Cooked Beets (*Cwikla*)
Fish Casserole (*Potravwa Zapiekana*)
Meatballs with Sour Cream (*Klopsk W Smietanie*)
Wigilia Fruit Compote (*Kompot W Spirytusie*)

Portugal
Chicken and Rice (*Frango com Arroz*)
Codfish Burgers (*Bolas de Bacalhau*)
Kale Soup (*Caldo Verde*)
Onion and Tomato Relish (*Sebolada*)
Pork Bits (*Vinho d'Alhos*)
Rice Pudding (*Arroz Doce*)
Roasted Bell Peppers (*Pimentos Assados*)

Romania
Cornmeal Pudding (*Budinca de Malai Dulce*)
Cottage Cheese with Dill (*Urda cu Marar*)
Dried Bean Salad (*Salata de Fasole Boabe*)
Fried Zucchini with Sour Cream (*Dovlecei Prajiti cu Smintina*)
Green Bean Soup (*Bors de Fasole Verde*)
Rolled Meat Loaf Stuffed with Macaroni (*Rulada de Carne Tocata Umpluta cu Macaroane*)

Russia
Buckwheat Groats with Mushrooms and Onions (*Grechnevaya Kasha*)
Buckwheat Pancakes (*Blinis*)
Cabbage Soup (*Schchi*)
Easter Cheese Cake with Candied Fruit and Nuts (*Paskha*)
Fish Cakes with Mustard Sauce (*Bitki s Zapravkoi Gorchichnoi*)
Pickled Mushrooms (*Marinovannye Griby*)

San Marino
Cornmeal Cake (*Bustrengo*)
Croquettes (*Crocchette*)
Pork in Milk (*Maiale al Latte*)

Serbia
Baked Beans (*Prebranac*)
Cooked Peppers (*Paprikas*)
Eggplant Relish (*Ajvar*)
Meat and Vegetable Casserole (*Musaka*)
Meat Patties (*Fashir*)
Sponge Cake (*Ledene Kocke*)
Thick Chicken Soup with *Kaymak*

Slovakia
Christmas Rice Pudding (*Koch*)
Drop Noodles and Cabbage (*Haluski Kapusta*)
Pork Stew (*Segedinsky Gulas*)
Potato Casserole (*Bryndzove Halusky*)
Potato Soup (*Zemiakova Polievka*)
Pumpkin (*Tekvicovy Privarok*)
Sausage Casserole (*Oravska Pochutka*)

Slovenia
Barley Gruel with Smoked Pork (*Krasci*)
Buckwheat Balls (*Ubrnenik*)
Cake Roll (*Koroshka Sharkel*)
Dandelion Salad
Deep-Fried Chicken (*Pohana Pichka*)
Fruit Ravioli (*Sadni Zhlikrofi*)
Potato Soup (*Prechganka*)

Spain
Baked Apples (*Pomes al Forn*)
Chargrilled Vegetables (*Escalivada*)
Eggplant, Potato, and Pepper Casserole (*Tumbet*)
Fisherman's Rice (*Arrosejat*)
Fritters with Chocolate (*Churros con Chocolate*)
Galician Vegetable and Sausage Stew (*Caldo Gallego*)
Lentil Salad (*Amanida de Llenties*)
Meat Stew with Capers (*Picadillo con Alcaparras*)

Pork with Prunes and Orange Juice (*Llom amb Prunes i Suc de Taronja*)
Potato Loaf (*Braç de Puré*)
Potatoes with Tomato-Chilli Sauce (*Patatas Bravas*)
Tiger Nut Drink (*Horchata de Chufa*)

Sweden
Fermented North Baltic Herring (*Surströmming*)
Ginger Snaps (*Pepparkakor*)
Meat Dumplings (*Palt*)
Potato and Anchovy Casserole or Jansson's Temptation (*Jansson's Frestelse*)
Salted Herring (*Inlagd Sill*)
Swedish Beef Stew (*Kalops*)

Switzerland
Alpine Macaroni (*Aelplermagrone*)
Bernese Hazelnut Cookies (*Berner Haselnussleckerli*)
Engadine-Style Barley Soup (*Engadiner Gerstensuppe*)
Graubuenden-Style Fried Potatoes (*Maluns la Lai*)
Meat in Cream Sauce (*Geschnetzeltes*)
Vaud Leek and Potatoes (*Papet Vaudois*)

Tyrol
Poppy Seed Doughnuts (*Crafons*)
Potato Grosti (*Grosti da Patac*)
Tyrolean Soup (*Tiroler Suppe*)

Ukraine
Christmas Wheat Porridge (*Kutia, Kutya*)
Hussar Roast (*Gusars'ka Pechenja*)
Noodle and Cottage Cheese Casserole (*Lokshyna, Zapechena z Syrom*)
Stewed Chicken (*Chakhokhbili*)
Stuffed Dumplings (*Varenyky*)

United Kingdom
Boiled Pudding (Spotted Dog, Spotted Dick)
Chicken Tikka Masala
Coronation Chicken
Deep-Fried Mars Bars (Scotland)
Eton Mess
Eve's Pudding
Glamorgan Sausages (*Selsig Morgannwg*)
Irish Apple and Parsnip Soup
Irish Fraughan Cake
Sausage and Apple Cottage Pie
Sausages in Batter (Toad-in-the-Hole)
Scotch Eggs
Scottish Berry Cream (*Cranachan*)
Welsh Leek Broth (*Cawl Cennin*)
Welsh Plum Tart (*Tarten Eirin*)

THE MIDDLE EAST

Bahrain
Eggplant Salad (*Uukkous Al-Badinjan*)
Lentils, Macaroni, and Rice (*Koshari*)
Shrimp Balls (*Chebeh Rubyan*)
Sweet Rice (*Mulhammar*)

Iran
Barley Soup (*Ash-e Jow*)
Eggplant Stew (*Khoresht Badenjan*)
Lamb and Spinach Stew (*Khoresh-e Esfanaj*)
Stuffed Fish (*Mahi Sefeed*)
Sweet Paste (*Halva*)
White Rice (*Chelo Safeed*)

Iraq
Cardamom Cookies (*Hajji Badah*)
"Judge's Tongue": Eggplant-Wrapped Meat (*Lissan el Quadi*)
Plain Rice (*Timman*)
Pomegranate Soup (*Shorbat Rumman*)
Rice and Eggplant Casserole (*Chalabis Re'id Magloube*)
Semolina and Syrup Dessert (*Ma'mounia*)

Israel
"Binder" for Passover (*Haroset*)
Chicken with Jerusalem Artichokes (*Of Bekharshaf Yerushalmi*)
Cucumber Salad (*Salat Melafefonim*)
Fruit Soup (*Marak Perot*)
Jerusalem-Style Mixed Grill (*Meorav Yerushalmi*)
Meat Baked in Sesame Sauce (*Siniya*)
Stuffed Eggplant (*Hazilim Memula'im*)

Jordan
Country-Style Beans (*Fassouliah al Balad*)
Fried Tomatoes (*Bandoora Maqliya Ma' thoom*)
Meat and Eggplant Platter (*Makhlubbi*)
Meat and Rice Dish (*Mansaf*)
Coffee (*Qahwa*)

Kurdistan
Chickpea Salad
Kurdish Tea (*Chai Kurdi*)
Okra and Stuffed *Bulghur* (*Kubbeh Bamya*, also *Kibbeh Bamya*)
Pine Nut–Stuffed *Bulghur* Dumplings (*Kubbeh Mahsh*, also *Kibbeh Mashi*)
Pumpkin in Syrup (*Shirini*)

Kuwait
Black-Eyed Peas in Tomato Broth
Chicken on Rice (*Mechbous*)
Shrimp Stew (*Murabyan*)
Sponge Cake
Tahina and Date Syrup Dip (*Dibis wa' Rashi*)
Tea (*Chai*)

Lebanon
Date-Stuffed Cookies (*Ma'amoul Btamr*)
Home-Style Egg Dip (*Tahinat el Beid*)
Parsley and Cracked Wheat Salad (*Tabouleh*)
Stuffed Cabbage (*Malfuf Mahshi bi Zayt*)
Toasted Bread Salad (*Fattoush*)

Oman
Earth Oven Roast (*Shuwa* or *Tanour*)
Fish with Rice (*Mezroota*)
Lamb and Date Stew
Sweet Porridge (*Khabeesa*)

Sweet Vermicelli (*Swayweih*)
Tea (*Chai*)

Qatar
Cumin Potato (*Batata b'Kamun*)
Dates in Butter Sauce (*Al Rangina*)
Ginger Pickle (*Achaar*)
Minced Meat Grill (*Kafta 'al Seekh*)

Saudi Arabia
Bread with Meat (*Aish Bel-Lahm*, also *Aysh Abu Laham*)
Meat Pies (*Samboosak al Saudi*)
Roast Stuffed Kid or Lamb (*Kharoof Mahshi*)
Saudi Rice (*Aroz Saudi*)
Sweet Dumplings (*Looqemat*)
Wheat Soup (*Shorobat al-Jereesh*)

Syria
Apricot Pudding (*Qamar El-Deen*)
Barley Broth (*Tirbiyali*)
Eggplant with *Tahina* (*Batlijan bi Tahina*)
Pita Bread (*Khubz*)
Rice with Meat and Fava Beans (*Fuul Ma'ruz*)
Syrian Spice Blend (*Baharat*)
Walnut Syrup Pastry (*Batlawa*)

Turkey
Dill and Yogurt Soup (*Yayla Çorbasi*)
Fruit Ice (*Sharbatee Gulab*)
Meatballs Stuffed with Nuts, Fruit, and Spices (*Icli Kofte*)
Stuffed Eggplant (*Imam Bayildi*)
Sweet Fritters (*Lokma*)

United Arab Emirates
Date Sweet (*Rangina*)
Festive Rice (*Al Koodhy*)
Truffle Stew (*Yakhnit el Kama*)
Yeast Pancakes (*Khameer*)

Yemen
Chicken Soup (*Shurba Dejaj*)
Crisp Savory Pancakes (*Mellawach*)
Ginger Coffee (*Qishr*)
Hawayij (Yemeni Spice Mix)
Honey Cake (*Bint al Sahn*)
Sana'a Meat Stew (*Saltah*)

OCEANIA

Australia
Aussie Burger
Damper
Fruit Cordial
Gingered Snow Peas
Kurrajong Muffins
Lamingtons
Pavlova
Pumpkin Soup
Rice Salad

Cook Islands
Banana *Poke*
Breadfruit Stew (*Tiopu Kuru*)
Breakfast Papaya
Cooked Taro Leaves (*Rukau*)
Fermented Fish Relish (*Mitiore*)
Marinated Flying Fish (*Ika Mata*)

Fiji
Baked Fish with Plantain
Baked Pineapple and Sweet Potato
Cassava Balls (*Topoi*)
Cassava Pudding (*Vakalolo*)
Chicken and Squash Soup
Fresh Fish (*Kokoda*)
Fried Bread (*Faraoa Funpana*)
Sweet Potato Bread

Kiribati
Corned Beef Stew
Ice Pops

Marshall Islands
Crab and Potato Cakes
Dried Fish
Macadamia Nut Pie

Micronesia, Federated States of
Barbecued Chicken
Mango and Passion Fruit Milk Shake
Sweet Potato Tops Salad
Tropical Fruit Salad
Vegetable Curry with Mackerel

New Caledonia
Boiled Yam
Breadfruit and Beef
Breadfruit and Fish
Breadfruit Fritters
Guava Pies (*Boulettes de Goyave*)
Papaya Fish Soup
Pineapple Fishballs
Prawns in Coconut Milk (*Crevettes en Coco*)
Stuffed Papaya

New Zealand
ANZAC Biscuits
Asparagus Soup
Baked Fish Steaks
Banana Sandwiches
Ginger Beer
Kiwi Cream
Meat Loaf
Sea Urchin (*Kina*) Pie
White Fish Fritters

Pacific Islands: Melanesia
Coconut Sweet
Sweet Potato Soup
Taro Cake

Pacific Islands: Micronesia
Chunky *Lumpia*
Coconut Milk with Rice (*Alaguan*)
Eggplants in Coconut Milk
Ham and Chickpeas (*Hamon Yan Gatbansos*)
Lime-Marinated Meat (*Kelaguen*)
Microwave *Mochi*
Relish (*Finadene*)
Spam Fried Rice
Stewed Pumpkin Flowers

Papua New Guinea
Baked Sweet Potato
Banana Pancakes
Banana Sago Dumplings (*Saksak*)
Bully Beef and Rice Casserole
Chicken Pot
Kokoda Fish
Sago Dumpling with Fish
Yam Patties

Samoa
Baked Coconut Milk (*Luau Palusami*)
Cooked Bananas (*Fa'alifu Fa'I*)
Corned Beef Packages (*Luau Pisupo*)
Raw Fish in Coconut Milk (*Oka I'a*)

Samoan Cookies (*Masi Samoa* or *Keke Faasaina*)

Tahiti
Chicken with Limes (*Poulet avec les Limettes*)
Coconut Bread (*Pain Coco*)
Marinated Raw Fish (*E'ia Ota; Poisson Cru*)
Mashed Breadfruit (*Uru*)
Papaya Soup (*Soupe de Papaya*)
Pork in Coconut Milk (*Porc au Lait de Coco*)
Taro Dessert (*Po'e Tarua*)

Tonga
Baked Coconut Shells (*To'okutu*)
Cooked Bananas (*Vai Siaine*)
Corned Beef Packets (*Lu Pulu*)
Marinated Fish (*'Ota 'Ika*)
Papaya Coconut Sweet (*Faka-ovaka*)
Taro in Coconut Sauce (*Faikakai Topai*)
Watermelon Drink (*'Otai*)

Vanuatu
Coconut Milk Bake (*Lap Lap*)
Fish Salad
Peanut Salad
Pork-Stuffed Taro
Tropical Fruit Sherbet

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina
Crepes with Milk Fudge (*Panqueques de Dulce de Leche*)
Golf Sauce (*Salsa Golf*)
Gramajo Omelet
Milk Fudge (*Dulce de Leche*)
Potato and Corn Pie (*Pastel de Papa con Elote*)
Stuffed Rolled Beef (*Matambre*)

Bolivia
Baked Corn and Cheese (*Humintas*)
Baked Custard (*Leche Asada*)
Bolivian Steak (*Silpancho*)
Spicy Pork and Egg Stew (*Fritanga*)
Spicy Sauce (*Llajua*)

Brazil
Bean Fritters (*Acarajé*)
Chicken in Nut Sauce (*Vatapá de Galinha*)
Coconut Custard (*Quindim*)
Mineira-Style Greens (*Couve à Mineira*)

Chile
Avocado Salad (*Salada de Palta*)
Beef and Corn Casserole (*Pastel de Choclo*)
Chilean Hot Pepper Sauce (*Pebre*)
Nut and Orange Pie (*Postre de Nueces y Naranja*)
Shrimp Soup (*Chupe de Camarones*)

Colombia
Chicken and Potato Stew (*Ajiaco de Pollo*)
Corn and Cinnamon Pudding (*Natilla Santafereña*)
Cornmeal Bread (*Arepa de Huevo*)
Fried Green Plantains (*Patacones*)
Poached Egg Soup (*Changua con Huevo*)

Ecuador
Apple Rings (*Rosquitas de Manzana*)
Cornmeal Omelet (*Mote Pillo*)
Pork Stew (*Seco de Chancho*)
Red Pepper and Chickpea Salad (*Ensalada*)
Shrimp Coconut Soup (*Chupe de Camarones con Coco*)

Guyana
Callaloo Fritters
Coconut Ice Cream
Cook-up Rice
Cream of Avocado Soup
Garlic Pork
Mango Pepper Sauce
Tropical Seafood Salad

Paraguay
Chickpea and Spinach Soup (*Potaje de Garbanzo con Acelga*)
Corn-Cheese Bread (*Sopa Paraguaya*)
Meat-Cassava Patties (*Payagua Mascada*)
Orange Custard (*Flan de Naranja*)
Squash Mash (*Kiveve*)

Peru
Bean Fritters (*Tacu Tacu*)
Caramel Sauce and Fruit (*Natillas Piuranas*)
Lima Potato Salad (*Causa Limeña*)
Pork and Potato Stew (*Carapulcra*)
Stuffed Bell Peppers (*Rocoto Relleno*)

Suriname
Coconut Milk Jelly (*Gelatin a la Ponche Crema*)
Fried Bean Balls (*Phulauri*)
Lentil Stew (*Dhal*)
Mango Chutney
Pan-Fried Flat Bread (*Roti*)
Peanut Soup (*Pinda Soep*)

Uruguay
Baked Fruits with Nut Topping (*Gratin de Frutas*)
Sausage Stew (*Chorizos en Cazuela*)
Stuffed Beef Roll (*Fiambre*)
Sweet Corn and Bell Pepper Casserole (*Tarta de Morrón*)
Uruguayan Marinated Chicken (*Pollo en Escabeche*)

Venezuela
Avocado Relish (*Guasacaca*)
Black Roast (*Asado Negro*)
Cheese Sticks (*Tequeños*)
Chicken Soup (*Hervido de Galina*)
Coconut Milk Layered Cake (*Bienmesabe*)
Corn Pancakes (*Cachapas de Jojoto*)

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INTRODUCTION

When told that we were writing a book about "all the world's cuisines," people were, inevitably, a bit doubtful. Given the large number of countries and the even larger numbers of recipes, cooking styles, and variations of dishes, trying to be inclusive has been a daunting task. As a result, much of this book was preceded by a cautious series of decisions of what *not* to include. Had we not done so, we would have found ourselves with a library, rather than a book.

The objective of this book is to introduce readers, in particular U.S. students, to contemporary foodstuffs, ways of eating, and typical cookery in almost every country in the world. With a few exceptions, we have tried to provide some insight into all nation-states (and some nationalities without states) existing today: 198 in all. A brief introduction of each country's history, geographic conditions, and ethnic or religious composition provides a rationale for the types of foodstuffs eaten and the ways of preparing and eating those items. Approximately five recipes are provided per country or group. The reader whose interest is piqued by one or another of the cuisines introduced here is urged to access other resources, some of which are noted in the Bibliography, to deepen and widen this initial acquaintanceship.

Another objective is to allow a certain degree of comparison between different food cultures. Several variants of some common dishes, for example, flavored/fried rice, stuffed vegetables, pasta, filled dumplings, *baklava* pastry, are offered that can be found in more than one culture. This will allow you to see how the same dish has been modified to suit different conditions. Readers with an additional interest in languages and history will be able to see the commonality of certain dishes such as filled dumplings in Mongolia, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe.

We have deliberately left out some of the more prominent and well-known "national dishes" in favor of less-well-known (in the United States at least) dishes that are nonetheless popular in their countries of origin. We were also advised to avoid recipes that (a) require special ingredients unavailable in the United States, (b) may not be suited to American taste, and (c) are too complicated.

Of course, none of these principles can be strictly observed: the entire point of national cuisines is that they make use of local resources, and many of these are not, or cannot be, exported. Wherever possible, however, we have made suggestions for substitutions. These might offend the purist: they certainly will change the flavor of the dish concerned. However, it at least gives you an opportunity to try the cooking method indicated and to get a shadow of the real thing.

Naturally, there are, in most cases, more than a few recipes that fit even our restrictive criteria. When choosing a recipe, we relied primarily on the criteria mentioned, but when faced with a multitude of recipes for the same dish, and even

more, when we had to choose between different dishes that would all have fitted, we adopted a simple scientific principle: whether we ourselves liked the dish in question! And, on occasion, we have indulged ourselves: rather than choosing "the most representative" dish in any country, we selected one that we knew and had enjoyed ourselves. We hope you will enjoy them as well. We have also, where necessary, simplified recipes to make them accessible to the target audience, which can be at the cost of authenticity—we apologize in advance to purists.

Cooking, Preparation, and Recipes

Some general principles of food preparation are worth noting, and they apply, on the whole, throughout human cooking.

Every human society known to us indulges in some form of cooking. In no society is all food eaten untreated. Treatment forms are a fairly restricted set. There are only so many ways to apply heat to food, or to change its chemical composition. Many societies—because of their local ecology, or for historical or technological reasons—tend to focus on or use one or another technique extensively. Obviously, the more sophisticated the technology available in a society and the wealthier the society, the more options there are. For example, simpler societies tend to use roasting, boiling, fermenting, treating in acid, and baking in embers or an earth oven exclusively, whereas technologically sophisticated societies have a range of cooking equipment from barbecue grills to freezers and microwave ovens.

In addition to cooking through the application of heat, there are a number of other ways of modifying foodstuffs to alter their flavor, texture, or preservation qualities. Marinating in acid is a common way—in the form of Osaka-style *sushi*, *ceviche*, or cucumber pickles—to preserve and change the flavor of food. Salting and smoking, largely used with fish and seafood, are also extensively applied to meat to make sausages, bacon, and ham. Fermentation of fish, legumes, milk, fruits, and grains with fungi not only preserves these foods but also changes them into completely different foodstuffs: fish sauce, soy sauce, tofu, yogurt, cheese, wine, rum, beer, and so on. One or another of these techniques, and often several, are used to provide unique flavors and textures to different foodstuffs throughout the world.

One thing to keep in mind is that recipes are not formulae; they are guidelines. With the exception of some forms of cooking, such as baking, where certain chemical processes must take place in a certain order, most dishes—including the most treasured "national" dishes—are subject to individual interpretation and variation. Every cook is convinced that his or her way of preparing a particular local or national dish is also the most authentic. And that is indeed the case. Authenticity is also becoming more difficult to contain, given the contemporary realities of international travel, modern media, and individual creativity. Authenticity lies not in the specific directions for preparation, but in the ways in which ingredients are addressed, the social circumstances in which the food is served, the ambience, and the company that consumes it.

How This Book Is Organized

We have tried to present a picture of as many countries (and some proto-countries) as possible, which was not always easy. Culinary information on some

places is scant. In other places, the cooking is no different from that of their neighbors. Countries appear in alphabetical order. Several ethnic groups that have unique cooking cultures have been included as well, without prejudice to legal or international issues.

Certain cooking ingredients or foods are cross-border phenomena. They are cooked and consumed in more than one country. We have indicated such foods, for example, the African porridge staple, in text boxes and referred to the boxes from time to time in the text.

Entries have approximately five recipes per country. The number is greater for the "Great Cuisines" of the world: France, China, India, and others, and less for those countries where we were unable to obtain recipes or find accessible sources, or where the recipes are very much the same as those of their neighbors. Each entry is preceded by a brief summary of culinary information about that country, including location, physical features that affect food choices, available foodstuffs, characteristic dishes, and styles of eating.

The recipes in each country are roughly organized in the form of an appetizer, soup, main dish, dessert, and festival dish. We have also made efforts to include at least one vegetarian dish in each national entry. However, in many countries, the order of dishes in a meal may be very different than the one Americans are used to: in some countries, no sweet may be served at the end of the meal, or all appetizers may come together with the main dish. For some countries it was not possible to follow this, in particular for those cuisines in which the order of food, or the idea of a meal, or the sources of food are different from familiar American ones. In theory, at least, you should be able to cook an ordinary full meal plus at least one celebration dish based on the recipes provided.

Serving Sizes

The recipes are designed for four people (with average appetites, and assuming that there will be other dishes consumed). On the whole, the quantities given in the recipes translate to roughly a half pound of meat, fish, chicken, or vegetables per person per dish. Obviously, if cooking for a smaller or larger or a more weight-conscious group, you will have to modify accordingly.

We are mindful that people's concepts of spiciness and seasoning differ. "To taste" in this book means adjust the seasoning, chilies, and sugar to fit your preference; otherwise, you may well find the dish inedible.

Advice on Preparation

Many recipes included in this book use fresh chili pepper. While its use is generally optional, there are some dishes where its absence would misrepresent the original dish. When preparing fresh chili peppers, please take the utmost precaution: use kitchen gloves when handling the seeds and cut flesh. Do not put the chilies or anything that has touched them to the eyes or face. If this happens, have someone assist you (especially if your own hands have touched the chili) to rinse the affected part thoroughly and immediately with cold water.

In the preparation of dough for dumplings or pastry, as well as for chopping, mashing, and pureeing large quantities of ingredients, we have suggested the use of a food processor for ease, speed, and convenience. Students who wish to prepare dough by hand are advised to follow instructions given in other cookbooks.

Use a sieve, potato masher, or food mill to puree or mash by hand, and a sharp knife for chopping.

Transliteration and Spelling

We have tried to be consistent about spelling *within* any country entry. However, many dishes with the same name are pronounced (and, when the country concerned uses Roman characters, often spelled) differently from one area to another. For example, the Persian word for a rich rice dish *pilaf* has mutated into *plov*, *pulao*, *palov*, and many other variations, depending on the country concerned. We have kept to the most common spelling used in the literature about that country rather than seeking for uniformity across borders.

GLOSSARY

Some ingredients are repeated throughout this book. In some cases, confusion exists about terminology. In other cases, because the ingredients are difficult to obtain in the United States, we have suggested substitutes, which, hopefully, will produce the same results in the dish.

Banana leaves Inedible, these are often used in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania to wrap packets of food for steaming (or baking in underground ovens), in much the same way that Mexican *tamales* are wrapped in corn husks. Sometimes, large taro leaves, also called "elephant ears,"are used, though the flavor they impart is different. In East Asia, lotus and bamboo leaves are also used for the purpose. If none is available, use aluminum foil instead.

Banana leaves are also used as platters, notably in Africa, India, Southeast Asia, and Oceania.

Bouillon cubes This handy (for the Western home cook) ingredient has become a flavoring principle in its own right in many cuisines around the world. Especially in Africa, a cube of stock, particularly that of a well-known European company, has become a staple flavoring ingredient for many dishes. See also *Stock*.

Bulghur Also spelled *bulgur*, *burghul*, or *bulgar*. Cracked whole wheat used in much the same way as rice. It is common throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, as well as Eastern Europe.

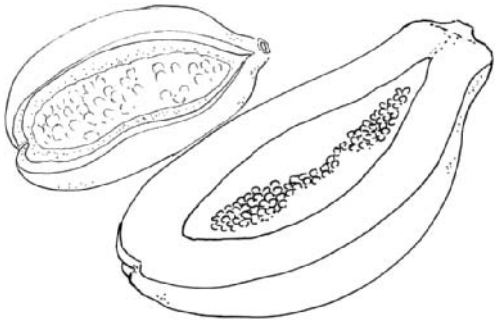
Cassava A root crop originating in the tropical Americas, but now popular as a food source elsewhere, notably in Africa. In the United States, it is available from Latin American stores as *yucca,* also spelled *yuca*. It is also known as *manioc.* The young leaves are also edible and sold frozen in some Latin American stores.

Ghee Clarified butter, often sold in large, half-gallon cans, is a staple cooking and flavoring agent throughout Central Asia, south Asia, and the Middle East. It can be made at home by melting butter and removing the solids. Clarified butter has much better keeping qualities than regular butter and is sometimes esteemed for that cause alone.

Groundnut The name for the peanut in most of Africa. In many recipes you can substitute natural peanut butter (most commercial peanut butters have sugar or other sweeteners, and often salt. This will affect the flavor).

Manioc See *Cassava*.

Palm oil A reddish-orange oil used for cooking and flavoring in many African and Brazilian dishes. It provides a unique flavor and color. Extracted from the oil palm, it is a major industry throughout western Africa and Sudan.



PAPAYA AND PAWPAW

Papaya and pawpaw Though some people (and recipes) confuse the two, these are botanically dissimilar fruits. Papaya (*Carica papaya*) is a tropical fruit about the size and shape of an elongated melon, and can grow much larger. The fruit cluster near the canopy of the leaves. The flesh is sweet, usually deep orange in color. The seeds are used in Southeast Asia and Oceania as a peppery spice in salads. Papaya is called pawpaw in certain countries. Another pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is the fruit of an American vine, usually grown in the southern states. The pale purple fruit is oval, about 3–5 inches long, and contains numerous sweetish seeds in a juicy matrix.

Staple For most people in most countries most of the time, the central part of a meal is, and was, a staple of some type of carbohydrate. The most common ones are produced by cooking wheat, rice, cassava, yams, potatoes, sorghum, millet, or other grains, usually by boiling or baking. Throughout wide swathes of the world these staples can be very similar.

Meat and vegetable dishes are often served in minute portions, and hot sauces were intended to add interest to the dish and supply some necessary vitamins and minerals. But, except on special occasions, these are not major parts of the meal, at least for the average individual. In the modern world we have grown away from the idea of a staple, both because we have so many to choose from (rice, noodles, bread, potatoes) and because, in affluent societies, meat and interesting vegetables are available much more easily. Even so, in many affluent societies such as in East Asia, most people do not think they have had a proper meal unless they have had some, at least, of the staple—for example, plain cooked rice—as part of the meal.

Steamer wrappings A common cooking method in many areas of the world is to wrap food in a packet made from a large leaf, which is usually inedible. The most popular leaf is the banana.

Make sure when making a wrapping to (a) scrape off the tough center rib without cutting the leaf, to ensure the leaf can be folded, and (b) steam or blanch the leaf, or pass rapidly through a flame, to soften it and make it pliable for folding. See also *Banana leaves*.

Stock or bouillon Many recipes call for a stock or a bouillon. The usual way to prepare this is to simmer meat, chicken, or vegetables for a long time, preferably with bones, and then strain the liquid, discarding the solids. Given the reality of modern living, we suggest that you substitute good readymade soups, broth, and stocks. Stock cubes are also used in some cuisines as a flavoring agent. To make stock, follow instructions on the package. Normally, 1 cube stock should be dissolved in 1 cup of very hot water.

Yam Various *Dioscorea* species. A root common in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific with a high starch content, often used as a carbohydrate staple.

In the southern United States, the word "yam" is applied to a different, unrelated plant, the sweet potato (*Ipomoea sp.*).

Africa

Asia

Europe

Latin America

Middle East

North America

AFGHANISTAN

Although landlocked, Afghanistan's strategic position in central Asia, linking the Far East and the West, has made it vulnerable to invasion by the Greeks, Mongols, Persians, British, Russians, and, more recently, Americans (in 2001). Afghanistan achieved democratic elections in 2004.

Afghanistan being a largely mountainous desert with cold winters and hot summers, water from melting snows makes possible the cultivation of wheat and other cereals, fruits, sugar beets, and sugarcane. Cotton is also grown for the edible oil obtained from its seeds, and sheep and other livestock are raised.

Afghan foods and cooking have been influenced by Islam (both Shi'a and Sunni); various ethnic groups in the country (Pashtun, Tajik, Baluch, Uzbek, Kazakh, etc.); and neighboring countries in Central Asia (including Iran and India) as well as in the Far East.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: flat wheat breads (*nan*, *chapati*), rice.
- The preferred meat is lamb. Goat, beef, water buffalo, camel, poultry, and game are also eaten, but not pork. Only freshwater fish, such as trout, carp, and catfish, are consumed.
- Dairy products: yogurt (fresh and dried), clotted cream (*qymak*).
- Vegetables: pumpkin, squash, loofah gourd, giant radish, eggplant, cauliflower, cucumber, chickpea, kidney bean, pea.
- Fruits: apricot, cherry, grape, mulberry (also dried), quince, plum, melon, watermelon, pomegranate, almond, pistachio, pine nut.
- Seasonings: fresh cilantro, mint, dill, saffron, turmeric, anise, asafetida, four-spice mix (*char masala*)—cassia (a milder form of cinnamon), cloves, cumin, and black cardamom.

Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes: *pilau*, *chalau*. Yellow rice with lamb, carrots, and raisins (*qabili pilau*) is regarded as the national dish.
- Kebabs: skewered lamb, mutton, or beef cubes; or ground meat rolls.

- Noodles and filled pasta: noodles with meatball-yogurt sauce (*aush*); pasta filled with chives in meat sauce (*ashak*); fried filled pasta (*boulanee*); layered wide noodles (like lasagna) with meat, chive, and yogurt sauce (*lakhchak*).
- *Burani*: braised vegetables in yogurt sauce.
- Drinks: tea (black or green) at every meal, flavored with cardamom; not usually drunk with milk.

Styles of Eating

- Two to three meals a day.
- Traditionally, sitting on the floor on cushions. A central platter of rice is shared, eaten with the fingers of the right hand only or scooped up with a piece of flat bread. Each diner has a side dish of vegetables or stew. Pickles, chutney, and fresh flat bread (*nan*) accompany the food. In modern and urban settings, food is served on tables; cutlery is used, but knives are not used much. Large parties are served buffet style.
- No special order for serving food. Main dishes, side dishes, and desserts are all brought to the table at the same time, although desserts are eaten last.
- Breakfast: baked potatoes or corn on the cob; porridge of barley or wheat (*haleem*) flavored with cinnamon, butter or clarified butter, and sugar; boiled curd (homemade white cheese); tea.
- Lunch: In rural areas, lunch is not traditionally eaten, but dried fruits and nuts are munched on. An urban lunch usually consists of flavored rice, a stew with vegetables (*qorma*) and some meat or beans, or a vegetable side dish (*burani*), pickles, chutney, and *nan*. Dessert is seasonal fresh fruit (grapes, peaches, melon, watermelon, plums, pomegranates, or citrus varieties).
- Evening meal: similar to lunch.
- Street snacks: kebabs, fried fritters (*jelabi*, *pakaura*), boiled chickpeas, potatoes, beans, eggs eaten with vinegar; dried fruits (raisins) and nuts in syrup.
- Eating out at tea houses (*chaikana*) to meet with friends is common for men.

Potato and Meat Packets (Boulanee)

These fried pastries are quite similar to wontons. There are two types: the most popular one is stuffed with local chives called *gandana*; the other with mashed potato. Both are served at birthdays or other family celebrations with drinks. In the recipe below, meat used in the filling can be left out and the amount of mashed potato increased to a total of three cups. Best eaten as soon as made, though also good cold.

1½ tsp salt
½ tsp cayenne pepper (optional)
2 TBS fresh cilantro, chopped
4 green onions (green leaves only), chopped
1 cup mashed potatoes
vegetable oil
1 pound ground beef
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ tsp ground coriander
1 package square wonton wrappers

Add ½ tsp salt, cayenne pepper (if using), cilantro, and green onions to mashed potatoes and mix well.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a skillet over medium heat.
Brown beef with pepper, 1 teaspoon salt, and ground coriander.
Mix ground beef with mashed potatoes. Let cool.
Take a wonton wrapper and place a spoonful of filling in the middle.
Wet edges of the wrapper with a little water. Fold over into a triangle. Cross over points of triangle and press to seal.
Flatten with your hand.
Heat ½ inch oil in a skillet and fry *boulanee* in batches until brown on both sides, for about 4–5 minutes. Fry only a few at a time. Do not let them touch one another.
Serve with hot mint tea.

Chicken and Chickpea Stew with Rice
(Nakhod Chalau, *also* Chelo Nachodo)

Two types of rice are used in Afghan rice dishes: long-grain for savory combinations with meat and/or vegetables (*pilau* and *chalau*) and short-grain for desserts or elaborate savory rice dishes called *bata* and *shola*. This is a family dish served at midday or in the evening. Stew and rice are served separately. Eat with pickles, chutney, and *nan*.

3 cups water
4 portions chicken legs, skin discarded
1 12-ounce can chickpeas
1 onion, chopped
1 rib celery and its leaves, sliced
1 medium carrot, sliced diagonally
½ pound zucchini, sliced
salt and pepper to taste
¼ tsp cumin powder
¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
¼ cup fresh dill, chopped
¼ cup lemon juice

Bring water to a boil in a nonaluminum saucepan.
Add chicken pieces, cover, and simmer for 15–20 minutes. Skim the top during cooking.
Add chickpeas, onion, celery, carrot, zucchini, salt, pepper, and cumin.
Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
Add cilantro, dill, and lemon juice. Simmer for 15 minutes.
Prepare rice.
Serve individual helpings of rice and ladle stew over it, ensuring everyone has some of the crisp rice from the bottom.

Rice

4 cups water
¼ tsp salt
2 cups raw rice, well rinsed
¼ cup ghee (or skimmed melted butter)

(*continued*)

In a covered saucepan, bring water and salt to a boil.
Add rice and cook uncovered over moderate heat for 5 minutes.
Drain rice in colander and rinse with cold water.
Return rice to pot and pour ghee over rice.
Cover pot and cook over very low heat for ½ hour. Rice should develop a crisp bottom layer.

Eggplant with Yogurt Sauce
(Bouranee Baunjan, *also* Burani Bonjon)

This vegetable side dish is very popular. Squash or zucchini can be used instead of eggplant.

3 medium eggplants
¼ cup oil
2 large onions, sliced
3 green bell peppers, seeded, sliced in rings
3 large ripe tomatoes, peeled and chopped
¼ tsp hot chili powder (optional)
¼ cup water
2 cups natural full-fat yogurt, drained
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt

Slice eggplant into ½-inch-thick pieces.
Spread on a tray and sprinkle liberally with salt.
Leave for 30 minutes, then rinse and dry well with paper towels.
Heat oil over medium heat in a skillet. Fry eggplant in a single layer until light brown on each side. Drain on paper towels.
Repeat with remaining slices. Add more oil as necessary (the eggplants use up a lot of oil).
In a covered saucepan, fry onions gently till translucent. Remove to a plate.
Place a layer of eggplant in the pan. Top with alternating layers of onion, green pepper, and tomato. Season each layer with salt and a bit of chili powder.
Repeat layering using remaining ingredients.
Add water, cover, and simmer gently for 35–45 minutes.
Combine yogurt with garlic and salt to taste.
Spread half of this mixture on the base of serving dish.
Top with vegetables, lifting eggplant gently to keep slices intact. Leave juices in the pan.
Top with the rest of the yogurt and drizzle with the remaining vegetable juices (not the oil).
Serve with flat bread.

Rosewater Custard (Firnee)

Sweet confections like this are made for special occasions such as weddings or the end of the Ramadan fast. Instead of cornstarch, rice flour is often used.

2 cups whole milk
½ cup sugar
4 TBS cornstarch
2 tsp rosewater
1 tsp cardamom
¼ cup pistachios, finely chopped

In a saucepan, mix milk, sugar, cornstarch, rosewater, and cardamom until smooth.
Bring to a boil stirring constantly. Remove from heat.
Cool slightly, and pour into four shallow glass bowls or serving dishes.
Refrigerate and serve, sprinkled with finely chopped pistachios.

Fudge (Sheer Payra)

This sweet is served with tea at family celebrations, such as an engagement or the birth of a baby.

⅔ cup milk
2 cups sugar
2 TBS light corn syrup
¼ tsp salt
2 TBS butter
½ tsp cardamom powder
¼ cup pistachio nuts, chopped
¼ cup walnuts, chopped

Heat milk, sugar, corn syrup, and salt over medium heat, up to 240°F, until sugar dissolves. Stir occasionally.
Take care not to let it boil over. Remove from heat.
Add butter. Cool mixture to 120°F without stirring.
Add cardamom and beat vigorously until candy is thick and no longer glossy.
Quickly stir in nuts.
Spread mixture onto a buttered 9 × 13 inch pan.
Let stand until firm. Cut into squares or diamonds with a greased, sharp knife.

ALBANIA

Albania has been an independent country since World War I. It was formerly under Byzantine and Ottoman Turkish rule, then under Communist dictatorship until the end of the twentieth century. Most of the country is mountainous with a temperate climate—cool to cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Wheat and barley, vegetables, and orchard fruits are raised on small plots.

Albanians are divided into two main ancestral tribes: Ghegs from the north and Tosks from the south. Approximately 70 percent of Albanians practice Islam, eschewing pork and pork products, but relaxing the usual prohibitions against alcohol. The cuisine is highly seasoned and greatly influenced by Turkish and Balkan cuisines. The Albanian diet is largely vegetarian except for special occasions.

Foodstuffs

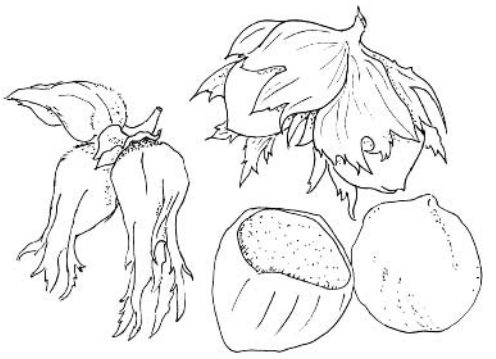
- Staples: bread (made of corn, wheat, rye, oats, or barley, depending on region). Unleavened, pancake-shaped corn bread is eaten in rural areas.
- Fish and seafood along the coast and cities; dairy products in the mountains, which include milk from goats and ewes made into *kos* (soured milk); many varieties of cheese.
- Favored meats are lamb, mutton, chicken. Liver is considered a delicacy.
- Vegetables: cucumber, onion, pepper, eggplant, zucchini, okra, squash (*kungull*), potatoes, and tomatoes. Contemporary ones include canned fruits and vegetables.
- Fruits: orange, lemon, fig, grape, wild berries, walnut, almond, pine nut, hazelnut, other nuts.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, lemon juice, dill, parsley, cinnamon, cloves, crushed or chopped nuts with garlic and oil, nuts and raisins in sauces. Olive oil is used for cooking and flavoring.
- Drinks: *kos*; tea with mint and sugar; Turkish coffee; grape juice, sugar, and mustard (*dukagjin*); wild berry wine (*hardic*); sauerkraut juice (*orme*), drunk as an appetizer; mulberry-flavored brandy (*raki*).

Typical Dishes

- Salad of finely minced fresh cucumbers, walnuts, and garlic (*terituar*).
- Soups: rice flavored with lemon, sometimes containing chicken or chicken livers (*corba*); soup with rice, flavored with freshly beaten eggs and lemon juice

(*supa ves limua*); cold yogurt and cucumber soup for summer (*tarator*); other cold soups of pureed or chopped fruit or vegetables.

- Main dishes: vegetables (e.g., peppers, tomatoes, zucchini) stuffed with rice and pine nuts (and sometimes ground lamb), seasoned with mint or cinnamon and oven baked (*dolma me vaj*); battered squash pieces, deep-fried and served with a garlic yogurt sauce (*kungull me kos*); a kind of pizza with well-seasoned vegetables, topped with cheese (*lakruar*); baked layered vegetables and meat (*moussaka*); rice pilaf with vegetables, meat, nuts, and raisins, flavored with cinnamon; lamb meatballs with mint and cinnamon (*qofte me mente*).



HAZELNUT

- Sweets and snacks: very sweet and rich desserts made with nuts and syrup. Almond cake, cut into diamond shapes (*ematur*); small cakes of cornstarch and syrup, flavored with lemon (*pelte*); sponge cake in spiced syrup (*revani me kos*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day, similar to most Western and European styles, in urban areas. In remote rural areas all meals are usually the same fare (*kos* and corn bread).
- In this male-dominated society, men are served first and treated with great deference and respect. In rural communities, the host (or senior male) always breaks the bread first and then shares it with all at the table. Only then is any other food placed on the table. In other areas, it is customary to bring all foods to the table, where they are shared by all the diners, usually following appetizers (*meze*).
- Snacks: late afternoon tea or coffee break may include sweet pastries, nuts, and fresh local fruits.
- Men spend a great deal of their free time in coffeehouses, drinking and talking, and eating snacks, which may be pastries or bits of grilled meat on skewers, or small salads.

Tirana Fergese with Peppers

This dish from the capital, Tirana, is served as an appetizer or on its own with bread.

3 TBS virgin olive oil
½ pound green and red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 pound tomatoes, peeled (by plunging them into boiling water for 1 minute) and chopped, or equivalent, canned
¼ pound butter
1 TBS flour
½ pound feta cheese
salt, black pepper, and chili powder to taste

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté peppers for 3 minutes.
Add tomatoes, sauté for another 3 minutes, and place in a 9 × 13-inch baking dish.
In the same skillet, melt butter. Stir in flour, cheese, and seasoning.
Pour over vegetables in baking dish and mix thoroughly.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 20 minutes, or until bubbling hot.
Serve immediately with flat bread.

Bean Soup (Jahni)

Bean soups are in great demand, especially during Albanian winters, which are cold and wet.

2 cups dry white (navy) beans
water to cover plus 3 cups hot water
½ cup onion, chopped
½ cup olive oil
2 TBS tomato paste
1 TBS chopped parsley
1 TBS chopped mint
salt and chili powder to taste

In an uncovered saucepan, cook the beans with water to cover for 5 minutes. Rinse beans and discard water.
Place beans with 3 cups hot water in a covered saucepan, and simmer briskly for 15 minutes.
In a skillet over medium heat, sauté onion in olive oil until golden.
Add 2 tablespoons bean liquid from the pot, and tomato paste, parsley, salt, and chili.
Cook for 10 minutes or until thickened. Stir into the beans.
Add chopped mint, cover and simmer for 2 hours on very low heat (or use pressure cooker for 30 minutes).
Serve hot.

Chicken with Walnuts (Pule me Arra)

Flavoring with walnuts, both the nut and the unripe green fruit, is common throughout the Balkans. Serve this for a main meal with rice or plain boiled noodles.

4 TBS butter
4 pieces chicken breasts, quarters, or legs
2 TBS flour
1 cup chicken stock (or 1 bouillon cube dissolved in 1 cup hot water)
5 cloves garlic, crushed
2 TBS vinegar
1 cup walnut meats, broken
salt, pepper to taste

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet. Brown chicken pieces. Keep warm.
Add flour and the remaining butter, stirring constantly until brown.

Add stock gradually, stirring constantly to avoid lumps.
Add garlic, vinegar, walnut meats, salt, and pepper.
Add chicken and simmer until chicken is tender, for about 30–45 minutes.
Spoon sauce over chicken pieces.

Fried Meatballs (Qofte te Ferguara)

These are served with rice or bread for a main meal.

2 pounds ground meat (lamb, beef, or chicken)
1 slice stale bread, crumbled
2 TBS chopped feta cheese
1 onion, minced
salt, chili pepper to taste
2 TBS crushed dried mint leaves
1 cup flour
oil for deep-frying

Combine thoroughly meat, bread, cheese, onion, salt, chili, and mint.
Form into 1-inch balls. Roll in flour.
Heat oil in a deep-fryer to 350°F.
Fry meatballs without crowding until light brown.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot with yogurt sauce.

Yogurt Sauce

1 cup plain yogurt
1 tsp crushed garlic
3 TBS dried, or 1 TBS fresh, mint
salt to taste

In a blender or food processor, blend all ingredients until smooth.
Chill before serving.

Cookies in Syrup (Sheqerpare)

This snack or sweet is eaten with small cups of Turkish coffee, with a glass of cold water on the side.

2 cups sugar
1 cup butter, softened
2 egg yolks, beaten
2 cups flour, sifted
1 tsp baking soda
1 cup water
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 to 3 whole cloves

In a food processor, mix 1 cup sugar, butter, yolks, flour, and baking soda until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove the dough and knead for 3 minutes.

(*continued*)

On a floured surface, roll out the dough to $\frac{1}{4}$-inch thickness. Cut into 2-inch rounds.
Place on greased baking sheets and bake at 350°F until pale golden (about 15–20 minutes).
Remove the cookies from oven and cool.
Meanwhile, bring remaining sugar and water to a boil in a saucepan.
Cook to soft-ball stage (234–240°F).
Remove from heat, stir in vanilla and cloves.
Pour this hot syrup over cookies.
Serve at room temperature.

ALGERIA

This North African country is on the shores of the Mediterranean. The second-largest country in Africa, Algeria was a French colony for a century until 1962. Algeria is mostly desert (the Sahara), with a hot, humid climate along the coastal plain, where cereals, vegetables, and fruits are grown and livestock are raised.

Muslims constitute a majority of the population, and belong mainly to two cultural groups: Kabyles, who are Berber-speaking highlanders, descendants of the original Numidian population; and Arabs.

Algerian cuisine shows traces of French influence, and food customs are shared with neighboring Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: couscous of wheat or millet (in the south), rice, wheat breads. Hard durum wheat is commonly used for making couscous. Barley is also used.
- Meat: preferred meat is mutton. Also consumed are beef (in the north), camel (in the south), and goat (everywhere).
- Fish and some seafood along the lengthy coastline.
- Milk (goat, sheep, and cow), and products such as soft cheeses and yogurt, which may be eaten savory or sweet.
- Vegetables: tomato, onion, garlic, pepper (both hot and sweet), eggplant, beans, and other pulses.
- Fruits: grape, plum, date, pomegranate, fig, olive.

Typical Dishes

- Couscous with a meat stew, as well as sweet couscous.
- Rice is eaten on special occasions, usually with a meat or fish dish.
- Festive foods include sweets made with honey, dates, and almonds.
- Fresh salads with lemon juice and olive oil; a variety of cooked salads or small side dishes of cooked vegetables.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are standard. Almost all meals end with coffee.
- Traditional dining is on the floor, with diners helping themselves from common dishes with their hands. Spoons are used for soups. Due to the long French presence, European-style dining is common in the cities, whose residents have adopted many French customs.
- Breakfast: bread and coffee, with butter or an oil dip.
- Lunch: light meal, usually salads, yogurt, eggs.
- Dinner: rice or couscous, vegetable and meat dishes. May be preceded by salads and/or soup and followed by fruit.
- Snacks are eaten at all hours.
- The coffee shop is the center of male social life. Pastries; grilled meats; and cups of coffee and tea, often flavored with mint or herbs, are always available.

Cucumber Salad (Salatat Khiyar)

Salads are served as appetizers or as accompaniments to the main dish.

2 large cucumbers, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, and thinly sliced
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut in strips lengthwise
½ cup green olive flesh, chopped
2 TBS fresh cilantro, chopped
5 fresh mint leaves, chopped
1 tsp paprika
3 TBS extra virgin olive oil
5 tsp vinegar
salt, freshly ground black pepper to taste

Toss the cucumbers in a salad bowl with green pepper, olives, and mint. Stir in the remaining ingredients, season with salt and pepper, toss again, and serve.

Eggplant Spread

This appetizer is eaten with flat bread (pita), or as an accompaniment to a main dish.

2 eggplants, about 2 pounds total weight
5 TBS olive oil
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 tsp sweet paprika
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
3–4 TBS fresh lemon juice
1 TBS parsley, minced
lemon and tomato wedges for garnish
salt to taste

Discard eggplant stems.
Preheat oven to 375°F.

Cut the eggplants crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices.
Lightly brush a baking sheet with oil.
Lay eggplant over it in a single layer, and brush with oil.
Bake for 15–20 minutes, turning occasionally, until light golden.
In a food processor, puree eggplant with garlic, paprika, cayenne, and salt until smooth.
In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over low heat.
Fry eggplant slowly, stirring frequently, for about 15 minutes, or until all moisture has evaporated.
Add lemon juice, and cook for 1 more minute.
Taste, and adjust seasoning.
Place eggplant in a bowl, garnish with parsley and lemon and tomato wedges.
Serve at room temperature.

Chickpea Soup with Cumin
(Hummus bi'l-Kammun)

Serve this soup as a first course for a heavy meal, or for a light meal with salads and flat bread.

3 cups canned chickpeas, drained
¼ cup olive oil
1 large garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp freshly ground cumin seeds
1 tsp paprika
¼ tsp *harissa* (hot chili paste, available in Middle Eastern stores)
1 TBS tomato paste
salt, freshly ground black pepper to taste
4 cups water
3 TBS fresh mint leaves, chopped

Skin the chickpeas by squeezing each bean lightly. Reserve ½ cup. Discard skins.
In a blender or food processor, puree chickpeas until smooth. Set aside.
Heat oil over low heat in a covered saucepan.
Sauté garlic until it just turns golden. Stir in cumin, paprika, *harissa*, tomato paste, salt, and black pepper. Cook for 2 minutes.
Add water and bring to a boil.
Add pureed chickpeas and cook for 15 minutes, or until heated through.
Add whole chickpeas.
Serve hot, sprinkled with mint.

Algerian Couscous Stew

Algerian stews tend to be French inspired and use European vegetables such as carrots, runner beans, and peas. Couscous (see box "Couscous, the North African Staple") as a stew and staple is ubiquitous all over northern Africa. Serve the stew

over the steamed cereal (equally and confusingly called couscous) for a main meal. A bowl of hot, spicy chili sauce (*harissa*) is usually served alongside for diners to help themselves.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
½ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp salt
3–4 whole cloves
¼ tsp cinnamon
¼ cup tomato paste
2 cups beef stock
3 green zucchini, cut into 3-inch chunks
3 yellow zucchini, cut into 3-inch chunks
3 large carrots, scraped and cut into 3-inch chunks
4 medium potatoes, skins on, quartered
2 red or green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and quartered
water to cover
1 cup cooked chickpeas (*garbanzos*), drained

In a large, heavy saucepan, heat oil and sauté onion over medium heat until translucent.
Add all the spices and tomato paste, stirring constantly for 3 minutes.
Stir in the stock and bring to a boil.
Add all the vegetables except the chickpeas. Add water to cover.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour.
Add chickpeas 5–8 minutes before removing from heat.
To serve, place a mound of prepared couscous cereal on individual plates.
Spoon stew over the couscous.

Algerian Meat Balls (Kofte)

Meatballs are a popular dish, often served as appetizers or as a main dish, accompanied by a vegetable salad or cooked vegetables.

2 slices dry bread
¼ cup milk
1 pound ground beef (substitute turkey or chicken)
1 large onion, finely chopped
½ tsp dried dill
4 TBS chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp chopped fresh mint
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
oil or fat for deep frying

Soak bread in milk until soft.
Mix thoroughly with all the ingredients except oil.
Shape into 1-inch balls.
Fry a few at a time in deep oil at 370°F until balls are golden brown.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

COUSCOUS—THE NORTH AFRICAN STAPLE

Couscous is the national dish of the North African region of the Maghreb—Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria—and contiguous African regions south of the Sahara. It is made most often of hard wheat (sometimes a mixture of hard and soft wheat, and, further south, even sorghum) that has been roughly ground. Rough or fine ground semolina is a good substitute. In some places couscous is sweet, though most versions are savory. The basic cereal is steamed over water or a stew, and the grains separated with a fork, or, preferably, with the fingers. Olive oil or butter is mixed with the grains to ensure separation. The steamed couscous is usually eaten with a stew (also called couscous, rather confusingly) poured over it. Couscous is so important in North Africa that in some places it is called simply "food" (*ta'am*). Couscous can be made in a special *couscousier*—a double boiler available from African or Middle Eastern shops—or in a plain double boiler with small sieve holes or lined with cheesecloth.

1 or 2 cups couscous grains
1 quart boiling water (or see Note 1)
1 TBS olive oil or clarified butter

Boil water in the lower section of the double boiler.
Put moistened couscous in the upper section and place over water once it is steaming fully.
Cover the double boiler with lid.
After 5 minutes, raise the lid, and break up the lumps with a fork (see Note 2) without removing from the boiler. As you do so, dribble oil into the couscous.
Repeat the breaking-up process every 5 minutes until the grains are fluffy, and have swelled to about double their dry size.

Note 1: The traditional and more flavorful method is to steam the couscous over the stewing meat and vegetables.

Note 2: Make sure the lumps are well broken up. Most North African cooks will use their fingers, but this can be painfully hot!

Sweet Lamb for Ramadan (El Hamlahlou)

This dish is served after the fast during Ramadan, the month of fasting, and is cooked without salt to prevent thirst. The quince used in this dish is a fruit that ripens in fall and adds a distinctive perfume. Substitute a firm, unripe pear or tart eating apple if quince is not available.

3 TBS butter
1 pound lamb, cubed
½ tsp ground cinnamon
3 cups water
½ cup sugar
12 dried prunes, pits removed, soaked in water to soften, and drained
1 quince (pear or apple), peeled, cored, and cut into wedges
2 TBS white seedless raisins
2 TBS whole blanched almonds
2 TBS orange blossom water

(*continued*)

Melt butter in a heavy saucepan over medium heat.
Brown meat lightly for 5 minutes.
Stir in cinnamon, water, and sugar.
Simmer until meat is tender (approximately 45 minutes).
Add prunes, quince, raisins, and almonds.
Simmer for 15–20 minutes until quince is tender.
Remove pan from heat. Stir in orange blossom water.
Serve at room temperature with rice.

Cauliflower with Harissa *Sauce*

Serve this either as an appetizer for a large meal, or with rice to accompany a meat dish.

1 cauliflower, trimmed and cut into florets
salted water to cover
2 TBS olive oil
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1 cup canned or fresh chopped tomatoes
1 tsp each salt, black pepper, and paprika
¼ tsp *harissa* sauce (see next recipe)

Cook cauliflower in boiling salted water until tender but still crisp. Drain and set aside.
Heat oil in a saucepan over low heat. Fry garlic until just lightly golden.
Stir in tomatoes, salt, pepper, paprika, and *harissa*.
Simmer for 10 minutes.
Add cauliflower to the sauce, stirring well until heated through, for about 5–7 minutes.
If sauce is too thick, add a little water.
Serve hot or cold.

Hot Chili Sauce (Harissa)

This North African condiment keeps well in the refrigerator if covered with a bit of olive oil. Serve it with couscous, grilled fish or meat, eggs, or as an alternative to commercial chili sauce.

1 red bell pepper with stalk intact
4 ounces fresh red chili peppers
4 fat garlic cloves, sliced
1 tsp ground cumin seeds
1 tsp ground coriander seeds
1 tsp sweet paprika
salt to taste
1 TBS tomato paste
1 TBS white or wine vinegar
3 TBS olive oil

Always wear rubber gloves when preparing chilies. Avoid contact with the eyes or nostrils, as chilies contain a powerful irritant.
Broil, roast (at 400°F), or grill on a barbecue, or on a grid directly over a low flame on a gas stove the whole bell pepper until the skin is blistered and blackened in spots and the flesh is very soft. Leaving the stalk makes the pepper easier to handle. Allow about 40–45 minutes in the oven; 20–30 minutes on an open flame.
Let cool, then peel and discard the core and seeds. Set aside.
Slice chillies lengthwise. Using a teaspoon, scrape off seeds.
Chop the chilies and transfer to a food processor or blender to blend until smooth with a pinch of salt, garlic, and the spices.
Add the roasted pepper and blend until smooth.
Add remaining ingredients.
Take a mere drop to taste and correct the seasoning, adding a bit more salt to balance the vinegar if needed.
Store in a covered jar in the refrigerator. Topped up with a tablespoon or two of olive oil to seal out the air, the harissa will keep for a long time.

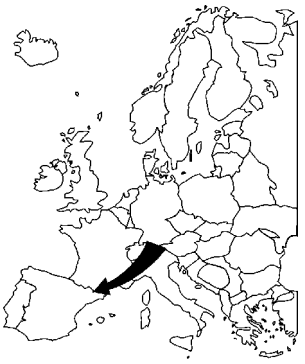
Algerian Charlotte

This sweet, popular in urban Algeria, owes its roots to a mix of French techniques and local produce.

juice of 1 orange
1½ cups water
3 TBS honey
1 TBS gelatin
1 cup dates, pitted and quartered
2 cups heavy cream
½ cup chopped almonds
2 TBS sliced almonds
2 chopped dates
grated rind of ½ orange

Blend orange juice, water, and honey in a saucepan over low heat.
Sprinkle gelatin over the mixture, stir until dissolved.
Add quartered dates.
Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes. Cool.
Strain mixture through a fine sieve and reserve.
Whip cream to soft peaks.
Add almonds to sieved mixture. Gently fold into cream.
Spoon into a serving dish.
Decorate with sliced almonds, chopped dates, and grated rind.
Refrigerate for 2 or more hours before serving.

ANDORRA



One of the smallest countries in the world (15 × 15 miles, approximately 2.5 times the size of Washington, DC), Andorra is located in the eastern Pyrenees mountains between France and Spain, completely landlocked. The country is mountainous, with high alpine meadows and little arable land. Andorran culture is a mix of Spanish, Catalan, and French cultures (the heads of state, by law, are the French president and a Catalan bishop).

Andorrans pride themselves on their pasturage and the good meat raised on them. Andorran cuisine resembles Catalan, but has a strong French influence.

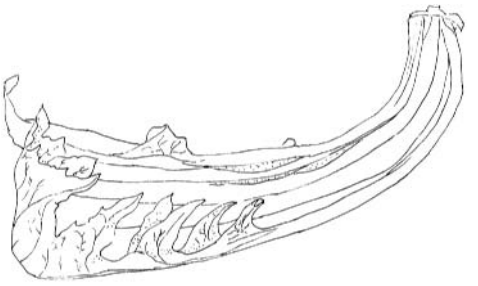
Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat bread, pastries, and buns.
- Meat, particularly veal and lamb, which are raised in the high Pyrenean pastures (all parts—blood, tripe, and other innards—are used). Preserved meats such as pork sausage (*llonganissa*), lamb haggis (*girella*), blood sausage (*botifarra*), and ham, as well as game (deer, wild boar, partridge, other wild birds) are consumed.
- Salmon, codfish, other fish; seafood (squid, clams, cuttlefish, etc.) transported from the coast.
- Many cheeses (made using cardoon as coagulant) and dairy products.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, wine, olive oil, pepper, tomato, sweet pepper, bay leaf, rosemary, thyme.

Typical Dishes

- Meat dishes: pork or hare stewed in wine, wild boar stew, lamb chops seared on a hot slate (a heated piece of oiled stone); roast or grilled wild boar, pork, lamb.
- Poultry: duck stewed with plums and pinenuts; partridge in vinaigrette.
- Cheeses from cow's, goat's, and sheep's milk: fermented cheese (*formatge de tupi*), preserved in distilled alcohol (*aguardiente*).
- Thick soups and stews of beans, vegetables, and meat: *escudella*, *vianda*.
- Fish dishes: river trout cooked on a hot slate; trout stuffed with ham and fried.

- Barbecue: lamb, poultry, pork, fish, and vegetables cooked on a piece of oiled, heated slate.
- Vegetable dishes: green cabbage, bacon, and potatoes (*trinxat*); dandelion leaf salad; roasted vegetables (*escalibada*, also spelled *escalivada*).
- Sweets: egg and honey (*ous i mel*); grape must and cottage cheese (*mostillo i el brossat*); mousses; crepes; sweet roll (*braç de gitano*); unleavened cake laced with moscatel wine and brandy (*coca masegada*).



CARDOON

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Place settings are standard European.
- Breakfast: coffee, roll or bread, jam or cheese, butter.
- Lunch: main meal, consisting of three to four courses—soup (*sopa*); salad (*amanida*); sausages, hams, other preserved meats (*embotits*), poultry or fish dish (this course constitutes the main part of the meal); and dessert, fruits, and cheese.
- Evening meals, often small savory dishes (*tapas*), are eaten with the whole family in attendance if possible.
- Snacks similar to Catalan *tapas* are eaten at mid-morning, in mid-afternoon, or early in the evening. These include bread rubbed with tomato and oil (*pa amb tomàquet*), and Andorran "pizza"—a crust covered with tomatoes, peppers, and other vegetables (*coca samfaina*).
- Drinks: fruit juice, milk, coffee, wine, sherry.

Tomato Bread (Pa amb Tomàquet)

This is a popular snack throughout the northeastern Iberian peninsula, though claimed as a Catalonian original. As for all simple foods, quality tells. The fresher the bread and the riper the tomato, the better. The following recipe is for one serving. Multiply as necessary.

1 slice fresh crusty bread
½ garlic clove
½ very ripe, very fresh tomato, cut along the equator
1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
salt, pepper to taste

Rub bread with garlic clove. Discard garlic.
Rub bread with tomato, crushing juice onto bread. Discard remaining tomato.
Dribble oil over tomato, and season.
Enjoy.

Codfish and Vegetables (Esgueixada)

Landlocked Andorra gets supplies of fresh fish and seafood from the Spanish coast. Salted cod (*bacalao*) has always been part of the Spanish larder. This dish is served for a light meal.

⅔ pound salted cod (*bacalao*, available from Hispanic stores)
1 whole eggplant, stalk intact
2 whole red bell peppers, stalks intact
2 tomatoes, quartered
4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled and quartered
3 TBS extra virgin olive oil
2 TBS wine vinegar
salt, pepper to taste

Soak cod in water for 24 hours, refrigerated; change the water at least twice.
Cut the cod into 3-inch pieces. Refrigerate.
Grill eggplant until very soft, and the peppers until blistered.
Slit eggplant skin, remove pulp, and chop roughly.
Core and seed the peppers, then slice into quarters.
In a bowl, mix grilled vegetables with the cod, tomatoes, and eggs.
Make a dressing with the oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper.
Pour over vegetables and cod.
Serve cold.

Cabbage and Potatoes (Trinxat)

This is a popular dish for a light meal and can be served with bread or salt herring.

1 small cabbage, quartered and cored
2 medium potatoes, peeled
1 tsp oil
3 strips fatty bacon, diced
3 cloves garlic, sliced thin

Boil cabbage and potatoes in salted water until well done and very tender.
Drain. Chop roughly.
In a shallow, wide saucepan, heat oil over low heat.
Fry bacon slowly, frequently turning until almost crisp.
Add garlic. Fry until translucent and bacon becomes quite crusty.
Stir in vegetables and raise heat, cooking for an additional 2 minutes.
Serve immediately.

Cream Roll (Braç de Gitano)

This is a popular dessert and snack to go with coffee. The name translates as "gypsy arm" from the chocolate, which gives the roll its "tanned" color.

4 eggs, separated
½ cup sugar
½ cup flour
a pinch of salt
1 ounce butter

Whisk egg yolks and sugar until light; mix in flour and salt.
Beat egg whites until stiff; fold into egg yolk and flour mixture.
Put batter into a lightly buttered Swiss roll pan.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 25–30 minutes, or until golden.
Cool slightly, gently remove cake from pan, then roll up in a clean, sugar-sprinkled cloth, kitchen towel, or plastic film (the sugar keeps the cake from sticking to the cloth). Set the wrapped roll aside to cool.

Filling

1 cup whipping cream
4 TBS apricot or peach jam
3 TBS or more sugar for sprinkling
3 TBS powdered cocoa
½ cup chopped, toasted almonds or other nuts

Whip cream to soft peaks. Gently fold in jam.
Unroll the cake and spread evenly with cream filling.
Reroll in cloth or plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
Sprinkle with sugar, dust with sieved cocoa, and then sprinkle with nuts.
To serve, cut crosswise into neat slices.

ANGOLA

A southern African country on the Atlantic coast between Congo and Namibia, Angola was a Portuguese colony from 1575 until independence in 1975, and then it suffered a post-independence civil war (1975–2000). Due to heavy mining during the war years, much agricultural land is dangerous and unusable. Hence Angola imports much of its food. Coastal areas are hot and humid, and some tropical cash and subsistence crops such as maize, sorghum, and manioc are grown.

The population comprises three large ethnic groups and several minorities. Angolan cooking combines African and Portuguese elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: stiff cassava porridge (*funge*).
- Many foods are flavored with *piripiri* (or *pili-pili*), a Portuguese-influenced pepper sauce.
- Portuguese elements such as olive oil are now part of the cuisine.

WOODEN MORTAR AND PESTLE

Typical Dishes

- Stews of meat, chicken, or fish, and vegetables, often flavored with palm oil.
- Portuguese-style soups of meat and vegetables.
- Fish, chicken, or meat cooked with coconut.

Styles of Eating

- People eat three times a day when they can afford it. Many poor households eat only two meals a day.
- Generally, family eating is communal, with diners helping themselves to porridge and stew from pots placed at the center. In most rural homesteads, food is served on a mat on the floor, though urban and middle-class homes generally eat European style, with standard European table settings.

- Breakfast consists of leftovers from the previous day, or cassava porridge and coffee.
- Lunch: cooked cassava with sauce/stew of vegetables, with or without meat.
- Evening meal: two to three courses (as affordable). Soup or appetizer, main dish, sweet.

Rice Soup (Sopa do Arroz)

This is a popular soup that can be served as a first course for a heavy meal, or for a light meal with a vegetable dish.

1 pound stewing beef, cubed
8 cups water
1 onion, chopped
1 cup uncooked rice
1 tsp salt
¼ cup fresh mint leaves

Bring the beef and water to a boil.
Reduce heat, and simmer until beef is tender (about 50 minutes to 1 hour).
Stir in onion, rice, salt, and mint.
Simmer for 20–25 minutes until rice is tender.
Serve hot in bowls.

Manioc Puree (Pirão)

This is a slightly more elaborate form of *funge*, the standard African stiff porridge (see box "African Staple"). This is served with stews; soups; or any meat, fish, or poultry dish. Brazilian toasted manioc flour, called *farofa* (available from specialty stores) can be substituted, making the toasting process unnecessary.

2 cups coarsely ground manioc (cassava or yucca flour, available at South American stores)
4 cups fish stock (or 2 cubes fish stock dissolved in 4 cups warm water)

Heat oven to 350°F.
Spread manioc flour on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 10 minutes, shaking the pan occasionally so as not to let it burn.
Bring stock to boil and pour the toasted manioc in a steady stream, stirring constantly with a whisk or wooden spoon.
Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until fairly stiff.

AFRICAN STAPLE (BÂTON DE MANIOC, *CHIKWANGUE*, FUFU, FULDE, FUNGE, NSIMA, SADZA, UGALI, ETC.)

Throughout most of Africa, the staple is a stiff porridge made from a local grain or starch: sorghum, maize, millet, or manioc (cassava, yucca). This may be eaten from a bowl with a spoon, with a stew or other vegetable or meat dish, or, commonly, with the fingers, in which case the porridge is made to be much stiffer. A diner takes a few fingers of the stiff porridge, flattens it lightly with the thumb, and scoops up the sauce provided.

The standard recipe is as given below:

1 cup finely ground grain, such as cornmeal
4 cups water or strained stock

Bring liquid to boil.
Pour in meal in a fine stream while stirring with a whisk.
Lower heat.
Stir with a wooden spoon until desired consistency is reached.

Here are some national/regional variations:

Banku and Kenkey

These are two staples from western Africa, served with a soup or stew or sauce. They are particularly popular in Ghana. Both are usually made from ground corn (maize), though *banku* can also be made from a mixture of maize and grated cassava.

Making *banku* or *kenkey* involves letting the maize (or maize and cassava tuber) ferment before cooking. *Banku* is cooked in a pot. *Kenkey* is partially cooked, then wrapped in banana leaves, maize or cornhusks, or foil, and steamed.

6–8 cups corn (maize) flour or cornmeal (ground corn or ground maize). (Cornmeal for *tortillas* is perfect. You can substitute equal parts corn flour and grated cassava to make *banku*.)
Banana leaves, or maize or cornhusks, or aluminum foil to wrap *kenkey* (the leaves or husks may be available at African, Asian, or Latino groceries)
1 TBS vinegar, for souring

Combine corn flour (or corn flour and grated cassava) with enough warm water to just dampen.
Mix well.
Cover the container with a clean cloth.
Set in a warm place, such as a warmed oven (unlit), or on top of the refrigerator, for 2–3 days. Fermentation may take longer than 2 days, especially in cool climates.
When properly fermented, it should have a slightly sour aroma like rising bread dough.
Alternatively, prepare the corn flour as described above, and let it ferment for about 6 hours. Then mix 1 TBS of vinegar into the wet corn flour.
Once the fermented dough is ready, prepare *banku* or *kenkey*.

Banku

Knead the fermented dough with your hands until it is thoroughly mixed and slightly stiff.
Bring 1 cup of water to a boil in a large pot.
Slowly add the fermented dough.
Cook for 20 minutes or more, stirring constantly and vigorously. The *banku* should become thick and stiff. Add water if it becomes too dry.
Divide the *banku* into serving sizes and roll with hands into a ball for each diner.
Serve hot or at room temperature with a sauce.

Kenkey

Knead the fermented dough until it is thoroughly mixed and slightly stiffened.
Divide the dough into two equal parts.
In a large pot, bring 1 cup of water to a boil. Slowly add one part of the fermented dough. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly and vigorously.
Remove from heat. This half of the dough is called the *aflata*.
Combine the *aflata* with the remaining uncooked dough. Mix well.
Divide the *aflata*-dough mixture into serving-sized pieces.
Wrap the pieces tightly in banana leaf, maize husks, or foil. Wrap like *burrito* coverings and seal tightly with cooking string.
Place the packets on a wire rack above water in a large pot.
Bring to a boil and steam for 1–3 hours, depending on packet size and thickness.
Serve at room temperature with any West African sauce or stew.

Bâton de Manioc/Chikwangue (Cassava "Sticks")

The cassava plant (*Manihot esculenta*) was brought to Africa by European traders in the sixteenth century. In the American tropics it was called manioc or yucca. Cassava tubers are made into *bâton de manioc* and other similar foods called (depending on location and local language) *bobolo*, *chicouangue*/*chickwangue*, *kwanga*, *mboung*, *mintumba*, *miondo*, and *placali*. These are the staple over much of central Africa. A similar dish of steamed starch is made from bananas in eastern Africa.

2 pounds cassava (yucca) tubers
banana leaves, or sheets of aluminum foil

Soak the cassava tubers in a tub for 3 days or longer.
Peel the tubers, cut into chunks, and wash them, changing water several times to remove the bitterness of some roots.
Use a mortar and pestle to pound the tubers into a thick, smooth paste.
Fold a mass of the cassava, about fist-sized, into the leaves, fold them into packets, and tie them closed. The packages should be like long sausages, 2 inches in diameter and 12 inches long.
Place packets in a large steamer over boiling water.
Cover tightly and steam for 4–8 hours.
The finished *bâton de manioc* should be very thick and solid.
Serve warm or at room temperature, with any central African soup, stew, or sauce. Cooked *bâton de manioc* will keep for several days, if kept in the wrapper in a cool, dry place.

(*continued*)

Bogobe

This is a stiff sorghum porridge from Botswana.

10 ounces dehulled, coarsely ground sorghum meal
1 quart water

Boil water.
Add sorghum meal to boiling water, stirring frequently.
Cook for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring frequently, until porridge reaches desired stiffness.

Fufu

Fufu is the southern and West African version of the stiff porridge eaten everywhere in Africa.

1 pound yams (*Dioscorea sp.*, not sweet potatoes)
½ pint water

Boil the yams until they are soft, and then place in a wooden mortar.
Pound the yam with a wooden pestle until it has the consistency of baker's dough. While this is being done water should be sprinkled onto the yam at regular intervals. Water also needs to be applied to the end of the pestle to keep the yam from sticking.
When the *fufu* is ready, place a cup of the mixture into a wet bowl and shake until it forms itself into a smooth ball.
Serve on a large platter with a soup or stew.

Gari

Popular in Western Africa, *gari*/*gali* is made from cassava at home. Today, many people in (and out of) Africa use packaged, commercially manufactured *gari*, which is sold in shops and markets. It only needs to be moistened to be ready for consumption.

Cassava tubers are cleaned, peeled, and soaked in water.
Grate tubers and pack mass into a clean cotton sack.
Top with weights to squeeze out the liquid and allow partial fermentation for 2–3 days. Spread *gari* out to dry in the sun.
Dry-fry in a shallow pan or wok until it is completely cooked and free of moisture.
The finished *gari* can be stored until needed.

Ugali

Eastern Africa's *ugali* (southern Africa's *nsima*, and *sadza*) is usually made from maize (corn), which was brought from the Americas to Africa by Europeans; before that it was made from millet. These starchy "foundations" are the eastern African versions of western African staples such as *fufu* (which is generally made from yams, plantains, or cassava), *banku*, and *kenkey*. They are all starchy foundations for the African soup or stew or sauce, or other dishes with sauce or gravy. They are generally made by boiling and vigorously stirring a starchy ingredient into a thick, smooth mush. As is often the case where the staple is the main part of the meal, many Africans feel they have not had a meal unless they have eaten *fufu* or *ugali* with a sauce or stew.

1 quart water
1 tsp salt
1 cup white cornmeal (tortilla meal is perfect)

Boil water rapidly.
Add salt.
Stir cornmeal into the boiling water gradually.
Simmer while stirring constantly. Serve in porridge consistency as breakfast dish, or cook so it can be rolled into a ball for other meals.

Chicken Stew (Muamba de Galinha)

A variation of this stew can be found in Congo and other southwestern African countries. *Muamba* means a sauce flavored with red palm oil and chopped chili pepper, and sometimes with ground peanuts.

juice of 1 lemon
2 garlic cloves, minced
salt and chili powder to taste
4 chicken quarters
1 cup red palm or other oil (or 1 cup equal amounts of palm oil and vegetable oil)
3 onions, chopped
1 whole hot chili pepper (if you prefer a spicier dish, chop the chili, and include the seeds)
3 tomatoes, quartered
1 squash or small sweet pumpkin (about 1 pound), seeded, peeled, and cubed
1 cup canned palm soup base (if available) or soup stock
12–24 small, tender okras, washed, trimmed, and sliced crosswise, ¼-inch thick

Make a marinade of the lemon juice, half the garlic, salt, and chili powder.
Rub thoroughly on chicken, and let marinate for 1 hour.
Heat oil in a deep skillet or a Dutch oven.
Brown chicken lightly on all sides.
Add onions, remaining garlic, chili pepper, and tomatoes.
Cover and cook over medium heat for about ½ hour, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is nearly done.
Add squash and cook for 15 minutes, or until tender but not mashed.
Add palm soup base (or stock) and okra.
Simmer for 5 minutes until okra is tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve with *funge* (see box "African Staple").

Fish with Vegetables
(Peixe Cocido com Verduras)

Serve this dish with *funge* for a main meal.

4 garlic cloves
salt to taste
1 tsp lemon juice
4 fillets of any firm-fleshed white fish
4 potatoes, peeled and quartered
4 carrots, peeled and quartered
1 small cabbage, quartered
2 cups chicken stock (or 1 bouillon cube dissolved in 2 cups hot water)
1 onion, sliced fine
1–2 TBS olive oil

Puree garlic, salt, and lemon juice in a food processor.
Rub the fish with the mixture. Set aside.
Bring to a boil the vegetables (except onion) and stock over medium heat.
Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, or until potatoes are done.
Add fish; top with onions in one layer.
Simmer covered until the fish is done, for about 10–15 minutes.
Remove fish carefully and place on a serving dish.
Surround with the vegetables.
Drizzle all with olive oil.

Angolan Grilled Pork
(Costeleta de Porco a Angolana)

Serve this dish with *pirão* for a main meal, accompanied by a vegetable dish.

1 tsp ground red chili pepper
2 TBS butter
4 pork chops
1 TBS olive oil
salt to taste
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Mix well the chili pepper and butter. Set aside.
Rub chops with olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
Let the chops marinade for 30 minutes, preferably longer.
Broil or grill the chops.
Brush with chili-butter on both sides several times.
Serve hot.

Coconut Dessert (Cocada Angolana)

This is a popular sweet made using local fruit.

1 cup water
2 cups sugar
2 whole cloves
4 cups grated coconut
1½ cups milk
2 TBS cinnamon

Heat water, sugar, and cloves over medium heat.
Cook to soft-ball stage (234–240°F).
Discard cloves.
Add grated coconut and milk; bring to a light simmer.
Pour into a covered container and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
Scoop into individual dessert bowls.
Serve sprinkled with cinnamon.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Antigua and Barbuda, located in the eastern Caribbean, has a tropical climate with a mostly flat volcanic terrain ideal for pineapples (its most famous product), bananas (called figs here), other fruits, vegetables, and livestock. In a country of three islands (the other is Redonda) surrounded by sea, fish and shellfish are major food items. A British colony until independence in 1981, it remains part of the British Commonwealth and retains many British features, such as afternoon tea with sandwiches and sweet pastries.

A majority of Antiguans are of African descent, with a minority having European origins. Antiguan cooking reflects these ethnic groups, and has also been influenced by neighboring islands' cooking. East Indian and Chinese spicing and styles of preparation also have been blended in.

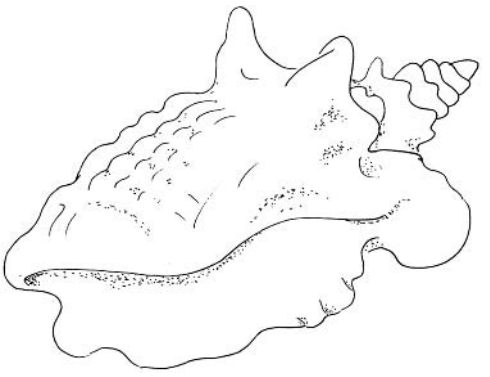
Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, corn, beans.
- Conch, shrimps, other shellfish; fresh and preserved fish; chicken, pork, beef, preserved meats (salt pork, corned beef).
- Vegetables: okra, sweet potato, eddo (taro tuber) leaves, spinach, pumpkin, squash.
- Fruits: mango, papaya, banana, coconut, black pineapple (Antigua's pride).
- Seasonings: thyme, ginger, hot pepper, chives, citrus, curry powder, and a hot table condiment of crabmeat, hot peppers, and lime or lemon juice.

Typical Dishes

- Rice and beans is the most common dish; next is cornmeal (*fungee*).
- Grilled fish or seafood, pork or chicken dressed with spicy sauce.
- Soups/stews of meat and vegetables: pepper pot.
- Seafood dishes: curry conch.
- East Indian–influenced curried chicken salad.
- European-style baked goods, sandwiches.

Styles of Eating



CONCH

- Three meals daily and snacks.
- Most families eat together in the evening at home.
- Breakfast: traditional—porridge or reheated *fungee* (cornmeal bread) with sweet or savory accompaniments, either fruit jam, boiled or fried fish. Modern—egg dishes, such as crab omelet; fresh fruits and juice; cereal; coffee.
- Lunch and dinner: similar offerings of rice and beans, *fungee*, pepper pot, or grilled fish or meat. Working people eat sandwiches or a light meal at midday.
- Savory or sweet snacks at mid-morning or mid-afternoon, which may be conch sandwich, fritters of cornmeal and vegetables or salted fish, pineapple cake, banana ice cream, or coconut chocolate cake.

Pineapple Chicken Soup

Antigua is home to the black pineapple, a small, sweet pineapple with dark green, almost black, peel. This is just one of the many uses Antiguans have for their beloved fruit.

4 chicken legs, skinned
1 onion, chopped
3 cups water
2 cups fresh pineapple juice
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup diced fresh or canned (unsweetened) pineapple
1 tsp fresh thyme (or ½ tsp dried)

In a saucepan, put chicken legs, onion, water, one cup pineapple juice, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 25–35 minutes, or until chicken is tender.
Take out the chicken, dice meat, and return to broth.
Add the remaining cup of pineapple juice.
Check seasoning.
To serve, add diced fresh pineapple and thyme. Serve with dumplins (see the next recipe).

Dumplins

There is no spelling mistake here: dumplins are spelled without a "g" in Antigua and most of the Caribbean. Dumplins are a traditional accompaniment to soup as well as the main dish. Dumplins when fried are called "bakes."

1 cup flour
½ tsp salt
2 tsp baking powder
¼ cup butter
¼ cup ice water

(*continued*)

Blend flour, salt, and baking powder.
Rub in butter until it resembles coarse meal.
Sprinkle with water to make a dough.
Knead until soft and smooth.
Shape into balls, flatten, and drop into boiling salted water. Let boil for 5–10 minutes.
Boiling for 20 minutes results in a waxy dumplin, which some Antiguans prefer.

Pepper Pot

This recipe uses bacon and meat cubes instead of the traditional pig's snout, oxtail, or pig's feet. Serve as a main course with dumplins or *fungee* (see the next recipe).

⅔ pound bacon, cubed
2 onions, chopped
1 pound pork or beef, cubed
½ pound corned beef, cubed
salt, pepper to taste
3 TBS tomato puree
1 small butternut squash, cubed
2 cups water
2 eggplants, diced
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup frozen spinach
4 *eddo* (taro) leaves (optional)
8 okras, topped and tailed (optional)
½ cup chives
¼ cup fresh thyme (or 1 TBS dried)

In a saucepan, slowly cook bacon over low heat until it releases some fat.
Stir in onions and fry until soft.
Add meat, corned beef, and pepper. Brown on all sides, for about 10 minutes.
Stir in tomato puree, squash, and water.
Cover and simmer for 30–40 minutes until meat is tender.
Taste and correct seasoning, if needed (the bacon and corned beef are salty).
Add eggplants, peas, spinach, *eddo* leaves (if using), and okras.
Simmer for 15–20 minutes until eggplant is tender but not mushy.
Stir in herbs.
Serve immediately.

Cornmeal Balls or Loaf (Fungee)

This cornmeal "bread" is usually made into balls. It is served hot as an accompaniment to stews and soups, fried or stewed fish, or any eggplant dish. Leftover *fungee* is pressed into a loaf pan and either lightly toasted or eaten cold for breakfast, usually spread with mango or other tropical fruit jam. The name derives from West Africa, where *funge* is a stiff staple porridge.

3 cups water
salt to taste
3 okras, cut into ½-inch rings
2 cups cornmeal
4 TBS butter

Bring water and salt to a boil in a saucepan. Add okras, and cook until done, for about 15–20 minutes.
Take out 2 cups of water from the pan (leave okra in the water).
Reduce heat.
Dribble in cornmeal to the remaining simmering water.
Stir with a whisk to avoid forming lumps.
Add a bit more water if necessary, but the mixture should be very thick.
When mixture comes away from the bottom of the pan, turn off heat.
Turn out *fungee* into a bowl and stir in butter, mixing well.
Using a soup spoon, form into balls.
Keep hot and serve immediately.
(Alternatively, butter a loaf pan and pour in *fungee*. Level the surface. When cool, cut into thick slices and serve as "bread.")

Curried Chicken Salad

The East Indian influence is evident in the curry powder used in this dish. This makes a light main dish for a midday or evening meal, or can be used as a sandwich filling.

1½ cups cooked chicken, diced
salt, pepper to taste
3 TBS grated coconut
½ cup seedless sultana raisins
1 fresh pineapple, cubed
3 TBS mango chutney
1 TBS curry powder
juice of 2 lemons
1 cup mayonnaise
1 head romaine lettuce, shredded

In a bowl, mix chicken, salt, and pepper.
Reserve a tablespoon each of coconut and raisins for garnish.
Mix in remaining coconut and raisins, pineapple, and chutney.
Add curry powder and lemon juice to mayonnaise (put in half the juice first, taste, and then add more if you wish).
On a serving dish or bowl, lay a bed of lettuce, and place the chicken mixture on it.
Pour over the curried mayonnaise.
Garnish with coconut and raisins.

Baked Bananas

Bananas, being one of Antigua's main fruit crops, feature in many dishes. They are used when unripe (green) as a vegetable, or when ripe, as dessert. Baked

bananas is a popular dessert throughout the Caribbean, and is often served alight with local rum.

4 bananas, sliced lengthwise
½ cup brown sugar
¼ cup butter
¼ cup milk
½ tsp cinnamon

Lay banana slices in a casserole dish.
Melt sugar in butter and milk in a pan over medium heat.
Pour over bananas. Sprinkle with cinnamon.
Bake at 350°F for 15–20 minutes.
Serve at once.

ARGENTINA

Argentina, a Spanish colony from the sixteenth century until independence in 1816, is three times the size of Texas, and occupies most of the southern tip of South America. The mostly temperate climate and the vast pasture lands (pampas) and plateaus enable production of beef, dairy products, and grains. A wide range of fruits, especially grapes, are cultivated for local use and export, making Argentina a world-class fruit and wine producer.

Over 97 percent of Argentineans are of European descent, mainly Spanish, Italian, German, and also Welsh; a small minority is Amerindian.

While traditional Argentinean food is Spanish influenced, more than one in three Argentineans have Italian blood, and Italian-style food is now predominantly eaten.

Foodstuffs

- Staple is beef, eaten by urban Argentineans at every meal; white maize for Northwest Amerindian Argentineans; cassava for Northeast Amerindian Argentineans.
- Pork, chicken, sausages; cheese; limited fish/seafood.
- Corn, cassava, potato, rice, bread, pasta are common accompaniments.
- Pumpkin, squash, corn on the cob, tomato, cucumber, quince, peach.
- Seasonings: not very spicy; onions, garlic, black pepper, thyme, oregano; table sauces are *chimichurri* (hot pepper, tomato, and onion) and *salsa golf* ("golf sauce") made of ketchup and mayonnaise.

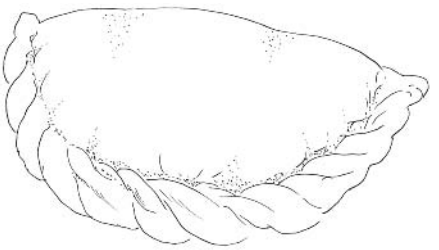
Typical Dishes

- The national dish is a mixed barbecue (*asado*) of steak, ribs, and sausage, especially for family gatherings.
- Italian-style dishes: pizza; pasta; fried cutlets (*milanesa*); ravioli; beef with tuna mayonnaise (*vitelo tonato*).
- Spanish-style rice-based dishes, savory pastries (*empanada*), and hearty stews (*puchero* or *carbonada*).
- Spanish-style taste combination of sweet and savory in stews of fruit and meat; dessert of cheese with jam.

- Sweets include Spanish-style caramelized milk fudge (*dulce de leche*) in desserts and pastries, especially in cookies called *alfajores*; Italian-style rich ice creams; Welsh-style tea cakes; German-style whipped cream and butter cakes.
- Drinks: fresh fruit juice and milkshake, strong coffee, chocolate (a chocolate bar served in steamed milk is a popular drink), *yerba mate*; wine is commonly drunk with meals.

Styles of Eating

- Four meals and snacks daily; varies by region.
- Breakfast: rolls or croissants; jam (often *dulce de leche*); strong coffee with milk; or *yerba mate*, a tea brewed from leaves of a holly-like plant in a decorative container and drunk through a silver straw. *Yerba mate* is drunk plain without milk or sugar.
- Mid-morning snack: strong, black coffee with sweet or savory pastry (*empanada*).
- Lunch: big meal of two or more courses plus dessert. Offices close for a 2-hour break between noon and 3 p.m. Courses for an urban meal include appetizers of cold cuts, olives, or cheese; a main course of steak with fried or mashed potatoes with a tomato and onion salad; and dessert of fresh fruit, custard, milk fudge or cheese with preserved fruit. Wine is the usual drink for adults; fruit juices or soft drinks for children.



EMPANADA

- Late afternoon heavy snack of tea/coffee with sweet cakes, savory sandwiches, or nibbles of cheese, ham, olives, or peanuts.
- Dinner, eaten late at 10 p.m., is the largest meal of the day. It consists of two to three courses plus dessert, often featuring beef. This is similar to lunch, but heavier.
- A typical regional dinner starts with appetizers of savory pastry or steamed maize wrapped in cornhusks, called *tamales* or *humitas*. The main dish would be a stew with pumpkins and corn, or meat grilled over charcoal. Dessert is fresh fruit or corn grits called *mazamorra* with milk, or cheese with preserved fruit.
- Argentineans eat out often as a family, usually for pizza, pasta, and other Italian-style dishes. Cafés in major cities are not just for drinking and eating, but also for social, business, and cultural (political, artistic, and literary) meetings. Patagonia has a big Welsh community, and Welsh tearooms are a regional specialty. Plentiful bakeries and pastry shops attest to the national sweet tooth.

Gramajo Omelet

Because dinner is taken very late, most people eat a late afternoon snack after work, almost a meal in itself. In cities, these are commonly eaten in cafés, and may be sandwiches of steak, steak and cheese, or toasted cheese and ham; savory pastries; sausage rolls; or an omelet with crisp potato straws and ham (Gramajo omelet). *Yerba mate* tea, coffee, fruit juice, or wine are drunk with this snack. The

Gramajo omelet is claimed to be the only truly original Argentinean dish, and is served with *salsa golf*.

5 ounces ham, cut into strips
1 cup cooking oil
3 medium potatoes, peeled, cut into julienne strips, washed, drained, and dried
6 eggs, beaten
salt, pepper to taste
parsley, minced

Brown ham lightly in 1 tablespoon cooking oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
Drain on paper towels; set aside.
Add rest of the cooking oil to the pan and fry potatoes until crisp.
Drain on paper towels; set aside.
Pour out excess oil from pan, leaving just a thin film.
Season eggs to taste with salt and pepper. Add parsley and ham.
Pour into the hot pan, stirring as for scrambled eggs.
When set but still moist, remove from heat.
Stir in the potatoes.
Serve at once, with Golf Sauce (see the recipe following), if desired.

Golf Sauce (Salsa Golf)

This is a common table sauce served with all kinds of fried meats or fish, but especially with the Gramajo omelet (see the previous recipe).

1 cup mayonnaise
juice of one medium lemon
2 TBS ketchup
1 tsp prepared mustard
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
salt, pepper to taste

In a bowl, mix mayonnaise with lemon juice.
Stir in ketchup, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and pepper.
Serve with fish, seafood, chicken, or omelets.

Stuffed Rolled Beef (Matambre)

Matambre means hunger killer, and this is usually eaten hot as a main course for lunch or dinner. Cold slices are often eaten with sandwiches.

1 piece (1½–2 pounds) boneless round steak, ½-inch thick
1½ tsp salt
½ tsp dried oregano leaves
¼ tsp pepper
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 green chili, chopped (optional)
1 onion, finely chopped

(*continued*)

1 clove garlic, minced
¼ cup bread crumbs
4 slices ham
1 carrot, peeled and cut into strips
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and quartered lengthwise
2 TBS vegetable oil
¾ cup water
1 tsp vinegar
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 bay leaf

Trim fat from beef. Pound to about ¼-inch thick.
Sprinkle beef with salt, oregano, and pepper.
Sprinkle with tomatoes, chilies, onion, garlic, and bread crumbs.
Lay ham slices over the beef.
Arrange carrots and egg pieces down the center of ham.
Carefully roll up beef around ham, vegetable, and egg filling.
Fasten with metal skewers or tie with string.
Warm oil slowly in a Dutch oven or a deep skillet until hot.
Put in beef roll and brown all over. Drain fat.
Add water, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, and bay leaf.
Cover and bake at 325°F until beef is tender, for about 1½–2 hours.
Remove skewers/string.
Cut beef roll into 1-inch slices.
Serve hot with meat juices, and potato and corn pie (see the next recipe), or cold in a bread roll as a snack.

Potato and Corn Pie (Pastel de Papa con Elote)

Corn and potatoes are native American vegetables that have been cultivated for thousands of years, and often cooked together with or without cheese. This casserole frequently accompanies a main meat dish, such as the stuffed beef roll above, for lunch or dinner.

4 potatoes, boiled and peeled
½ cup milk
½ cup butter
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp ground black pepper
salt to taste
2 cups fresh, canned, or frozen (thawed) sweet corn kernels, drained

Mash potatoes with milk and ¼ cup butter.
Stir in the garlic powder, pepper, and salt. Put the mixture into a buttered 9 × 13-inch baking pan.
Melt remaining butter in a frying pan over medium heat.
Add corn and cook for about 5 minutes.
Take off heat and puree in a blender until creamy.
Pour over potato.
Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes.
Serve with stuffed rolled steak.

Crepes with Milk Fudge (Panqueques de Dulce de Leche)

This is a well-loved dessert or accompaniment to coffee. Milk fudge (*dulce de leche*) (see box "Dulce de Leche") is the most characteristic sweet of Argentina as well as other South American countries, eaten as jam for breakfast, spread on rolls or croissants, or used as fillings in cakes and cookies.

2 cups all-purpose flour
3 cups milk
2 eggs
milk fudge (bought or home-made, see the next recipe)
butter

Mix flour, milk, and eggs in a blender.
Heat a frying pan on medium heat.
Melt a pat of butter.
Pour a thin layer of crepe batter, swirling the pan quickly to spread it.
When the crepe starts to brown at the edges, flip and cook for a minute or so more.
Remove from pan and spread with milk fudge.
Roll and serve hot as dessert or a snack.

Milk Fudge (Dulce de Leche)

This rich and creamy sweet, often translated as caramelized milk, is a favorite spread on bread or toast for breakfast, as well as a filling for various cakes and pastry.

There are several ways of making this confection now popularized throughout the world. All involve slow cooking for 2–3 hours. One quite risky method involves cooking the unopened can of condensed milk completely submerged in boiling water in a pressure cooker for one hour. The easiest and fastest way is to buy it ready-made in Hispanic stores and large supermarkets. The recipe below is given for very patient cooks as it takes 3 hours.

DULCE DE LECHE

Usually a sweet spread made from milk boiled with sugar, or from lengthy simmering of condensed milk. It is popular throughout Latin America, particularly in the southern cone of South America, and is used in Portugal, Spain, and France. *Dulce de leche* has a caramel-like flavor, though it is not produced by caramelization but by the Maillard reaction, a chemical reaction between an amino acid and a reducing sugar in the presence of heat.

Dulce de leche is used as a spread on bread, a sweetener, a flavor for ice cream, and a filling for cakes and confections. It also comes in a more solid form, somewhat like fudge. It is the most popular sweet flavoring in Argentinean cuisine.

1 can (14½ ounces) sweetened condensed milk

Fill the bottom pan of a double boiler halfway with hot water; bring to a boil.
Pour condensed milk into the top pan; cover and set over the bottom pan.

(*continued*)

Let water boil for 5 minutes, then reduce heat to medium and cook for about 3 hours or until milk is very thick and brown.

Check the water level in the bottom pan frequently and replenish with hot water as needed.

Cool milk fudge and put into a covered jar. It can be kept for weeks in the refrigerator. Spread on bread or toast for breakfast, or as a filling for cakes.

ARMENIA

A landlocked country in the southern Caucasus between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia is the oldest Christian country in the world. It had been ruled by the Greeks, Persians, Arabs, Egyptians, Ottoman Turks (for four centuries), and the Russians until 1991. Much of the country is mountainous, with cold winters and hot summers, enabling intensive grape cultivation.

The majority of people are Armenian, with minorities of Kurds, Azeris, Georgians, and Russians. Armenian cuisine reflects its history, with Turkish, Persian, and Middle Eastern elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, flat wheat breads, cracked wheat (*bulghur*).
- Bread is unleavened *pideh* or *lavash* made of wheat.
- Vegetables: leek, green bean, squash, okra, eggplant, salad greens, cucumber, pepper, tomato, zucchini, pumpkin, cabbage; fresh or dried wild herbs in salads; beans; chickpeas (the favorite) and other pulses.
- Lamb, chicken (preferred), beef, goat, game birds (pigeon, duck, quail, goose); eggs; fish; oyster, mussel.
- Citrus fruits, plum, apricot, peach, grape, melon, quince, apple (fresh and dried); pistachio, almond, walnut, chestnut, pine nut.
- Dairy products: milk of ewe, goat, and cow cultured as buttermilk or yogurt; many fresh, hard, soft, and aged cheeses.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion; fresh and dried herbs, nuts, sesame seeds; vinegar, pepper; clove, saffron, cinnamon, and other spices; egg and lemon juice sauce; clarified butter (ghee); wine; fresh cream, olive oil for cooking and salads.

Typical Dishes

- Breads: *lavash*—unleavened thin sheets of wheat flour, sprinkled with sesame seeds. *Pideh*—yeast-leavened, crisp-crusted round wheat bread or long loaves, sprinkled with sesame seeds.
- National dish: pilaf of *bulghur* and minced lamb or chicken flavored with butter, cinnamon, and pepper, simmered in broth (*keshkegh*).

- Bulghur is a ubiquitous ingredient: used in soups or side dishes; mixed with chopped vegetables in salad; or mixed into meatballs. A typical dish is broth-cooked bulghur with shredded chicken, cooked for hours and then beaten to the consistency of smooth paste. This dish is called *hariseh*, a variation on the original Arabian savory wheat and mutton pudding known as "harees," not to be confused with the hot chili sauce called *harissa*.
- Cheese appetizers, toppings.
- Nut sauces and fillings for baked goods.
- Rice dishes: pilafs with meat, vegetables, fruits, and nuts; saffron pilaf—rice flavored with rosewater and saffron for weddings.
- Salted dried beef, flavored with fenugreek (*basterma*).
- Vegetable dishes: pickles; salad; olives and nuts in olive oil and lemon juice or vinegar (*yaz salata*); vegetable stew (*kchuch*); oven-baked casserole of layered fried eggplant, ground beef or lamb, and tomatoes (*patlijan moussaka*); slow-simmered stew of mixed vegetables and meats flavored with tomatoes, salt, pepper, and mint (*tureli ghuvedge*). Stuffed vegetables: rice-stuffed grape leaves flavored with browned onions and allspice, served cold (*asma-yaprak dolma*); mixed stuffed vegetables (sweet pepper, tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant) (*ech-miadzinskaya dolma*); baked meat-stuffed eggplant (*sumpoog letzvadz*), served hot or cold. Fresh salads are an important part of many one-dish meals.
- Stews of meat and vegetables: chickpea puree flavored with meat, stock, and onions (*nohond basti*); sliced leeks cooked with beef or lamb in an egg-lemon sauce (*prassa basdi*); beef or lamb stew flavored with garlic, vinegar, and hot peppers (*pacha terbiehli*).
- Soups: rice and lemon (*printz abour*); lentil and lemon (*vousp abour*).
- Meat dishes: meatballs "tartare"—raw beef and fine bulghur (*keyma koufta*); meatballs with bulghur in tomato sauce (*kharpout koufta*). Grilled meat dishes: skewered *shish kebab*; beef or lamb cubes marinated in olive oil and cumin seed (*kimionlou*), served on flat bread.
- Fish baked in garlic, olive oil, tomatoes, and lemon (*baluck plaid*).
- Desserts and sweets: usually fruit and cheeses. Sweet preserves of fruits or vegetables (*anoush*); multilayered pastry filled with nuts and doused with spiced syrup (*baklava*); small, sweet, sesame-sprinkled rolls (*choerek*); sesame spiral cookies (*simit*); shredded crisp wheat with nuts and syrup (*tell khadayif*); candied nuts.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Table service and manners are of secondary importance.
- Breakfast: cheese, olives, and bread with unsweetened coffee (*soorj*).
- Midday meal: hot vegetable or vegetable and meat casserole.
- Dinner: in the evening, between 7 and 8 p.m. (brandy aperitif) *raki*; nibbles of cheeses, various types of olives (black, green spiced, salted, etc.); salad or soup; roasted meat, fish, or poultry, with vegetables (cooked and cold); rice or *bulghur* pilaf; wine or sour milk (*leban*) or yogurt; dessert of fresh or dried fruits, nuts, and cheeses. Coffee may end a special dinner.
- Snacks: nuts or seeds (toasted and salted sunflower, pumpkin, watermelon); pastries, coffee or wine; *leban* and fruit.

- Drinks: *raki* (brandy) as an aperitif; red and white wines usually accompany meals for all ages; yogurt and sour milk (*leban*) usually part of lunch or refreshing snack drink.

Fried Cheese Turnovers (Dabgadz Banir Boerag)

These are eaten as snacks with coffee.

3 cups flour
1 egg, beaten
1 cup water
½ cup vegetable oil
½ tsp salt
oil for deep-frying

Mix all dough ingredients together and knead.
Divide into two balls, cover, and set aside for ½ hour.
On a floured surface, roll out each ball ⅛-inch thick.
Cut out 4-inch disks of dough.
Place 1 tablespoon filling in the middle.
Fold dough over and seal edges well with moistened fingers.
Repeat with the remaining dough and filling.
Heat oil and fry turnovers, a few at a time, until golden brown on both sides.
Serve hot.

Filling

1 pound strong yellow cheese, preferably two different kinds, grated roughly
¼ cup parsley, minced
1 small onion, minced
salt, pepper to taste
1 tsp red pepper

Mix all ingredients thoroughly.

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds (Tutumi Gud)

These are a popular snack.

1 pound fresh, large, plump pumpkin or squash seeds
1 quart water
¼ cup salt

Bring seeds to a boil in salted water.
Simmer for 30 minutes. Drain.
Spread seeds on a cookie sheet.
Bake in preheated 300°F oven, stirring occasionally, for about 1 hour, until seeds are dry and lightly toasted.
Store in an airtight container.

Sautéed Lamb (Kalajosh)

Lamb is the favorite meat. This is served for a main meal with salads and a cooked vegetable.

½ cup olive oil
1 pound boneless lamb (or other meat), cubed
1 medium onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, mashed (or garlic powder)
salt, pepper to taste
6–8 slices bread, cubed
½ cup yogurt

Heat oil over medium heat; sauté meat until lightly browned.
Stir in onion, garlic, salt, and pepper.
Reduce heat to a minimum, and cook, covered, until tender, for about 40–50 minutes.
Add bread cubes, stirring until browned.
Serve warm over rice.
Spoon yogurt over meat.

Peanut Butter–Stuffed Wheat Balls (Baki Koufta)

This is a common Lenten dish in most of Armenia. For the Armenian church (one of the oldest Christian churches; Armenia was the first country to convert to Christianity), Easter is the major festival of the year, and Lent is taken seriously.

Filling

6 medium onions, minced
⅓ cup water
1 cup fresh parsley, chopped
1 TBS fresh basil, chopped
1 pound peanut butter
¼ cup *tahina* (sesame seed paste, undiluted)

Put onions and water in a saucepan; cook over medium heat until onions are soft.
Strain onions and set aside to cool, reserving water for *koufta* mixture.
Mix well the parsley, basil, peanut butter, and *tahina* into the cooled onions.

Koufta Balls

2 cups canned chickpeas, drained
½ cup semolina
2 cups fine bulghur
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup water
2 quarts boiling water mixed with 2 tsp salt for cooking

Blend chickpeas in a blender or a food processor.
Add semolina, bulghur, salt, pepper, reserved onion water, and 1 cup water.
Set aside for 30 minutes for grains to absorb the moisture.
Remove mixture from processor.
Knead with wet hands until mixture holds together firmly (about 12 to 15 minutes).
Form a ball from a handful of the mixture (about the size of a small egg).
Press your thumb into the ball to make a cavity, leaving a wall about ¼-inch thick.
Place a spoonful of filling into the cavity.
Close the cavity by gently pushing the sides together.
Be sure the filling is completely sealed. Smooth the surface of the *koufta*.
Continue with remaining mixture.
Bring water and salt to a boil.
Gently slide 6 *kouftas* into boiling water, and return water to a boil.
Reduce heat, and simmer *kouftas* for 10 minutes or until they rise to the surface. Remove them carefully and continue cooking the rest.
Make sure not to break the shells, or the filling will spill into the water.
Cool to room temperature and serve.

Armenian Pilaf (Prinzov Pilaf)

Pilaf is a Persian dish of rice cooked with meat and vegetables, and it has now spread worldwide.

⅓ cup butter
½ cup vermicelli noodles, crumbled
1 cup rice
3 cups chicken broth (or 1½ cubes chicken bouillon dissolved in 3 cups hot water)
salt and pepper to taste
2 TBS butter
1 heaping TBS mixed slivered almonds and pine nuts

Heat butter in a heavy skillet over low heat.
Brown vermicelli until golden (watch carefully as noodles burn easily).
Stir in rice until well coated with butter.
Add broth and seasoning; bring to a boil.
Stir once, then simmer for 15–20 minutes until broth is absorbed and rice is soft.
Let rice sit for about 20 minutes before serving.
Meanwhile, heat butter in a separate pan; brown nuts for about 30 seconds, stirring constantly.
Scatter over rice before serving.

New Year Pudding (Anushabur)

The Armenian New Year is celebrated in spring.

1 cup whole-grain hulled wheat (available from health food stores)
6 cups cold water
1 tsp vanilla
¼ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup raisins
1½ cups sugar
¼ tsp salt
1 TBS blanched slivered almonds and ¼ cup walnut halves to garnish

Rinse wheat until it runs clear. Drain.
Add wheat to cold water and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat. Cover tightly and cook over lowest heat for 1½ hours.
Check the wheat at this point: all the water should be absorbed and the wheat soft.
If dry and not yet cooked, sprinkle about ¼ cup boiling water over wheat, cover, and cook for 10 minutes more.
If any water remains, cover and cook 5 more minutes, or until absorbed.
Mix in vanilla, walnuts, raisins, sugar, and salt.
Transfer to a deep serving dish.
Sprinkle with nuts.
Serve cold.

AUSTRALIA

Australia is a large continental country (the only country that comprises a whole continent) in the South Pacific, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and is only slightly smaller than the lower 48 states of the United States combined. The climate is generally arid to semiarid: temperate along the coast and in the south and the east. Tropical swamps and plains occupy the north, while the center of the continent is a low plateau desert.

Aboriginal settlers arrived on the continent from Southeast Asia about 40,000 years ago. Europeans—Dutch and British—began exploration in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, Australia was formally claimed for Great Britain. Six colonies became the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. Some aboriginal settlers in certain regions follow their own customs, living a seminomadic existence based partly on hunting and gathering. Later settlers came from all over the world, most notably from the British Isles, southern Europe (Italy and the Balkans), Polynesia, and, more recently, China, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent.

The most common foods in the country are based on English tastes modified by locally available products. In the past fifty years or so, the introduction of food patterns and choices from Southeast and south Asia has yielded a world-famous "fusion" cuisine, based on a mix of Anglo and Asian type recipes with specifically local products.

Australians pride themselves on "bush tucker": food derived from foraging in the country's extensive wild places. Few of these are raised commercially, though Australian scientists and food enthusiasts are starting to market these products. Bush tucker includes vegetable products, sources of proteins as well as spices; a variety of crustaceans and arthropods; and of course the meat of larger animals such as kangaroos and salt-water crocodiles and fish like the barramundi.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: bread, potatoes, rice, pasta (depending on ethnicity).
- Wheat, barley, fruit, cattle, sheep, poultry, and sugarcane are grown and exported in large quantities.
- High consumption of mutton, lamb, beef, and exotics such as kangaroo.
- Vegetables: all European and most Asian kitchen vegetables.

- Dairy products: milk is consumed in great quantities. Ice cream, cheese, and cream are also consumed.
- Fish: marine fish including tuna, various jacks; local river fish.
- Bush tucker: *wattleseed* (bush seeds tasting like a mix of chocolate and coffee); *Illawara* plums (which resemble cashews in that the stone grows outside the berry); *yabbies* (a fresh-water crayfish), *muntharies* (a berry tasting like raspberries and apples); *kakadu* plums (a sharp-flavored plum with the highest vitamin C content of any fruit known); *pepperberry* (a very strong, peppery berry from Tasmania); lemon aspen (a small fruit with an intense citrusy taste); *akudjura* (sweet-savory berry tasting like a tamarillo/caramel mix); and *witjuties* (edible, nutty-flavored grubs).
- Fruits: tropical fruits and temperate fruits, including bananas, coconuts, apples, peaches, grapes (table and wine).

Typical Dishes

- Barbecued meat (steaks, skewered meats, hot dogs), and seafood, notably shrimp.
- Various carbohydrate-rich dishes, including potatoes (chips, boiled, mashed), pasta and other noodles, rice, breads, and rolls.
- Vegetable salads as appetizers and fruit salads as dessert.
- Cakes and pastries such as *pavlova* (meringue baskets) and lamingtons (iced cake pieces); damper (bread baked in the ashes of a fire).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Place settings and dining are European standard.
- Australians are famous for barbecues, which are possible in most parts of the country throughout the year.
- Breakfast tends to be substantial, with eggs, steak or sausages, toast, sometimes baked beans or chips; Vegemite (a vegetable-based salty spread) on toast.
- Lunch, except for Sundays, may be less substantial, consisting of sandwiches and a drink, sometimes eaten on the run.
- Supper, sometimes called "tea," tends to be heavy, with meat and potatoes or other starchy foods, salads, an appetizer, and a substantial dessert.
- Many people stop for "elevenses," a break around 11 a.m., hence the name (an old English custom), or any time during mid-morning for tea and cake, and in the afternoon (tea, sandwiches, and cakes). Vegemite, a dark-brown, vegetable-based savory spread, is the most common everyday filling on buttered bread.
- Tea, very strong, milky, and sweet, is drunk at all hours. Beer and fruit juices and excellent local wines are drunk with meals or on their own.

Fruit Cordial

Cold fruit punch can be a refreshing drink at any time of the day during Australia's hot summers.

1 pint boiling water
1 cup sugar
1 tsp tartaric acid
1 tsp citric acid
juice and grated rind of 1 lemon
juice and grated rind of 1 orange

Pour boiling water over sugar, tartaric acid, and citric acid in a large heat-proof bowl. Cool.
Add lemon and orange juices. Refrigerate.
To serve, dilute with iced water or club soda to taste.

Gingered Snow Peas

Snow peas, also called sugar peas, refer to edible bean pods. Snow peas and ginger are both introductions from Asia that have become a part of Australian cuisine. These peas would normally accompany a meat dish.

¾ cup chicken stock
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 tsp ginger, shredded
¾ pound snow peas
½ cup spring onions, with white part, sliced 1 inch long
2 cups mushrooms, sliced
1 TBS soy sauce

Boil chicken stock and garlic until reduced to ¼ cup.
Remove garlic.
Place stock, ginger, and vegetables in a wok.
Cook on high heat, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes.
Add soy sauce and remove from heat.
Serve with steamed rice.

Kurrajong Muffins

Kurrajong muffins are made from wild native parsnips or yams. Kurrajong flour gives a peanut buttery taste. Serve with sour cream.

1 cup self-rising flour
¼ cup kurrajong flour (or substitute whole wheat flour)
½ tsp baking powder
½ cup milk
⅓ cup honey
1 TBS macadamia oil (or substitute peanut oil)
1 cup parsnips, peeled and grated (or substitute carrots)
½ cup peanuts, shelled, skinned, and briefly toasted, ground to a rough powder (not to a paste)

In a food processor, mix flours, baking powder, milk, honey, and oil to form a soft dough.

(*continued*)

Blend in parsnips and peanuts.
Spoon into a greased muffin pan.
Bake in preheated 375°F oven for 20 minutes, or until done.
Serve warm or cold.

Pumpkin Soup

Serve this as a first course to a heavy meal, or for a light meal with bread and salad.

2 cups vegetable stock (or 1 cube vegetable bouillon dissolved in 2 cups warm water)
1½ pounds pumpkin, cubed
2 onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp nutmeg
salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup cream

Bring vegetable stock to a boil.
Add pumpkin, onion, and garlic.
Simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables are soft.
Cool slightly. Puree in a blender until smooth.
Reheat soup. Stir in nutmeg, salt, and pepper.
Serve with cream.

Aussie Burger

Australia is justifiably proud of its beef, and this hamburger combines local beef with vegetables and fruit.

4 hamburger buns
4 leaves lettuce
4 beef hamburgers, each ¼ pound, fried
8 slices bacon, fried crisp
4 slices yellow cheese
1 onion, sliced into thin rings
1 large tomato, sliced thin
4 slices pickled beetroot, sliced thin
4 canned pineapple rings
4 eggs, fried sunny side up
tomato ketchup

Cut hamburger buns in half.
Distribute all ingredients equally on the bottom halves, in the order given, starting with lettuce and ending with egg.
Cover with upper half of bun.
Grill and heat through.
Serve immediately. Pass the ketchup.

Rice Salad

This salad combines Asian and Western elements. Serve with any main dish.

3 cups cooked long-grain rice
¼ cup sweet young peas
1 onion, chopped fine
1 small can sweet corn
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
¼ cup soy sauce
1 TBS mayonnaise
1 TBS allspice powder
1 TBS fresh cilantro, minced

Combine rice and vegetables in a bowl.
Mix soy sauce, mayonnaise, allspice, and cilantro.
Mix thoroughly into rice mixture.
Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
Serve cold.

Damper

Damper is the bush bread of Australia. Drovers (cowboys) baked damper buried in the hot ashes of campfires. To many Australians, damper represents the spirit of the frontier.

4 cups self-rising flour
½ tsp salt
1¼ cups milk
butter
extra flour for dusting

In a food processor, mix flour, salt, and milk until it forms a dough.
Butter a 10-inch round baking pan (traditionally, a sealed, round Dutch oven–like "camp oven" would be used) and dust with flour.
Place dough in the pan. Cut a cross on the top surface to stop the bread surface from cracking during baking.
Seal baking pan tightly with foil and bake in the hot ashes of your campfire for about 30 minutes (or bake uncovered in a preheated 425°F kitchen oven for 20–30 minutes, or until it tests done).
Eat with a cup of strong tea, sweetened with sugar and milk.

Lamingtons

These cakes are essential for every Australian school fête and for children's birthday parties.

½ cup butter
⅔ cup sugar
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups self-rising flour
⅓ cup milk
1½ tsp vanilla extract
2 TBS butter
¼ cup boiling water
3 cups confectioners' sugar
⅓ cup cocoa
2 cups grated coconut

Cream butter with sugar until light and fluffy.
Gradually add eggs, mixing well.
Add flour and milk alternately, stirring after each addition.
Stir in ½ tsp vanilla extract.
Spread batter in a buttered 9 × 12-inch baking pan.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 35 minutes.
Remove from baking tray and cool on wire rack.
Meanwhile, melt butter in boiling water.
Sift confectioners' sugar with cocoa.
Stir in butter/water mixture and 1 tsp vanilla to make a thin icing.
Cut cooled cake into 30 squares.
Dip each square in icing, roll in coconut, and leave to dry on a wire rack.

Pavlova

Australia's favorite cake was invented in its current form in New Zealand, though the name was first used in Australia for a similar confection. The name derives from a visit by the famous Russian ballerina, Anna Pavlova, to Australia. Both New Zealand and Australia claim this delight for their own.

4 egg whites, at room temperature
1 tsp vanilla extract
¼ tsp cream of tartar (or 1 tsp lemon juice)
¼ tsp salt
1 cup sugar
1 cup whipped cream
2 cups mixed fresh (preferably exotic tropical) prepared fruit (pineapple, strawberries, kiwifruit, or mango, sliced into bite-size pieces; passion fruit pulp and seeds; physalis or Cape gooseberry, husked but kept whole)

Line a baking sheet with wax paper. Draw a 9-inch circle on the paper. Place on cookie sheet.
Beat egg whites, vanilla, cream of tartar, and salt to soft peaks.
Beat in sugar gradually, 1 or 2 tablespoons at a time, until mixture forms stiff peaks.
Spoon the mixture within the marked circle to create a meringue "nest," mounding higher around the edge to create a depression for the filling.
Bake in a preheated oven at 250°F for 1¼ to 1½ hours until crisp on the outside but soft inside, golden in color, and firm to the touch.

Leave in the oven, turn off heat, and allow to cool with the door open.
When cool, peel off the wax paper.
Spread whipped cream in the center of meringue shell.
Arrange mixed fruit over the cream.
Chill until serving time.

AUSTRIA

Austria is a landlocked country in central Europe and the heir of the Austro-Hungarian empire, which ruled most of central Europe for centuries. Much of the country is mountainous, with deep, fertile valleys. The cool, temperate climate enables a range of crops and cattle to be raised for milk, meat, and cheese.

The cuisine is diverse, sophisticated, and rich, reflecting the ethnic mix and the regions of the former empire, with Germanic, Slovenian, Hungarian, and Turkish elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples include potatoes, dumplings, bread, and noodles.
- Breads of all kinds, dark and light, rolls; buns made with every combination of wheat and rye flours, sweet and soured dough.
- Meat: veal and pork predominate; venison and other game, chicken; goose, eggs, preserved meats including smoked and dried sausages, bacon (*speck*), ham also consumed.
- Dairy products: milk (drunk hot), buttermilk; cream (notably whipped for topping desserts and coffee), sour cream; soft spreading white cheese (*quark*) and other cheeses.
- Fish: trout, carp, eel, catfish, perch.
- Vegetables: cabbage, beet, carrot, pepper, wild and cultivated mushrooms.
- Fruits: plum, grape (for eating and for making wine), apple, pear, strawberry, wild cranberry.
- Seasonings: paprika, caraway seeds, fennel, onion, garlic, dill, parsley, other herbs; chocolate, vanilla; citrus rind; wine; sour cream, sweet cream, butter, lard.

Typical Dishes

- Typical Austrian dishes vary depending on location and ecology.
- Boiling, frying, and roasting are common.
- Meat dishes: boiled beef (*tafelspitz*); roast suckling pig; crumbed, fried, and baked chicken (*Wiener backhendle*); scallops of veal, egged, crumbed, and crisply fried (*Wiener schnitzel,* the most famous Viennese specialty).
- Stews of meat and vegetables: cubed veal in Hungarian-influenced paprika-onion sauce, occasionally with potatoes and carrots (*goulasch*).

- Cheese dishes: cheese-stuffed pasta (*kaesnudel*).
- Dumplings, savory and sweet: Tyrolean bacon-filled (*speckknoedel*), tiny dumplings (*spaetzli*); apricot-stuffed dumplings (*marillenknoedel*).
- Soups: mixed meats in herbs with sweet and sour cream (*saure suppe*).
- Desserts, often topped with whipped cream: *strudel* (apple or other fruit rolled in a pastry layer); rich pancake served with applesauce (*kaiserschmarren*); rolled pancakes filled with preserves (*palatschinken*); filled doughnuts (*krapfen*).
- Cakes: many-layered sponge cake with chocolate filling and caramel glaze (*dobostorte*); nut pie with raspberry preserve (*Linzer torte*, claimed to be named after the town Linz, or a baker named Linzer); chocolate cake (*Sachertorte*).
- Snacks: chocolates, candy, pastries, sweet coffee; sweet wine.
- Drinks: coffee in many varieties (flavored with chocolate, vanilla, or served with cream or whipped cream); white/red wine; beer.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day; breaks for coffee and cake at mid-morning, mid-afternoon, and at night. Bread is present in some form at every meal and often is part of snacks as well.
- European place settings.
- Formality is the norm, even in family meals.
- Breakfast: many types of plain or sweet rolls; preserves; hot milk, tea, or coffee.
- Mid-morning snacks (around 10:00 a.m.): a small bowl of hot soup, or a sausage with bread and pickles, washed down with a beer.
- Lunch: soup (always; otherwise it is not considered a meal); meat or chicken; bread, dumplings, or noodles; green salad; cheese, fresh fruit, or compote.
- Mid-afternoon snacks: cake or pastry and coffee.
- Evening meal: same as lunch.
- Night snacks: sandwiches; salad; coffee.
- Street snacks: *wurstel* (sausage); pastries.
- Coffee drinking and serving is an art, and spending some time every day at a cafe is a social necessity for many.

Bacon Dumplings (Speckknoedel)

Dumplings are a major item in the Austrian diet. These are a typical Tyrolean peasant dish, filling and simple.

6 slices bacon, diced
8 slices stale white bread, crusts removed, cut into ½-inch cubes
⅓ cup cream or half-and-half
½ cup self-rising flour
½ tsp caraway seeds
¼ tsp dried thyme
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp salt
1 egg yolk, beaten
2 TBS unsalted butter
½ cup onion, finely sliced
1 TBS flour
½ pound sauerkraut, rinsed and drained
3 TBS chopped fresh parsley

(*continued*)

Dry fry bacon until crisp and brown. Remove from heat and pat dry with paper towels. Set aside.
Brown the bread cubes in the bacon fat until golden, and place in a bowl.
Pour cream on bread and let stand until the cream is absorbed.
Gently blend in the bacon, flour, caraway, thyme, pepper, ¼ tsp salt, and egg yolk. Let the mixture rest for 30 minutes.
Mold into 1¼-inch balls. (Add a little more cream to bind if a bit dry.)
To cook dumplings: bring at least 3 inches of salted water to a simmer in a large pot.
Slip the dumplings gently into the simmering water. (The water must not boil, or the dumplings will be tough.) Allow to cook for 10 minutes (test one to see if it is done).
Meanwhile, prepare the sauce: in a saucepan, melt the butter and sauté the onions until softened.
Sprinkle with flour, letting the flour absorb the butter.
Gradually stir in the sauerkraut.
Cover and cook until the sauerkraut is heated through and the flour has lost its raw taste.
Season with salt and pepper.
Sprinkle the dumplings with parsley, and serve hot with the sauerkraut.

Paprika Cheese Spread (Liptauer)

There are many variants of *Liptauer*. The three central ingredients are *topfen* or *quark* (a spreading white cheese between cottage cheese and cream cheese in texture, but blander), paprika, and chives. Serve as a spread on bread for a light meal or snack.

2 cups low-fat cream cheese (*quark/topfen* or cottage cheese, drained and blended till smooth)
½ small onion, minced
4 TBS fresh chives, snipped fine
1 tsp sweet paprika
salt to taste

Optional (any or all of the following):
⅛ tsp ground caraway seeds
1 tsp anchovy paste
1 tsp prepared mustard
⅛ tsp freshly ground white pepper
15 capers, drained, minced
1 pickled gherkin, minced

Combine cheese with the other main ingredients and mix well.
Blend the optional ingredients in a food processor, and add to the cheese mixture.
Mix thoroughly.
Refrigerate in a covered container for at least 30 minutes.
Serve on rye bread.

The Kaiser's Hunting Vittles (Kaisers Jagdproviant)

Most of the Kaisers (Austrian emperors) were fond of hunting, and this royal snack is now a common food.

- 1 loaf short French bread (*batard* or short baguette, about 12–15 inches long; if you can only get a long baguette, cut in half to use)
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled, whites and yolks separated
- 4 TBS softened butter
- ⅔ cup cottage cheese
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 TBS mustard
- 1 TBS anchovy paste
- ¾ pound smoked ham, diced
- ¾ pound roast pork, chicken, or turkey diced
- ¾ pound strong yellow cheese, diced
- 3 ounces pickled gherkins, chopped
- 2 TBS snipped chives

Cut off a slice from one end of the *batard* (or baguette), and hollow out the middle of the loaf, about 1 to 1½ inches in diameter, using a long bread knife. Leave the "walls" intact. Wrap the hollowed out bread in plastic wrap to keep from drying out.

Dice the removed bread and place in a food processor bowl.

Finely chop the egg whites.

To the food processor bowl, add egg yolks, butter, cottage cheese, salt, pepper, mustard, and anchovy paste, and blend until smooth.

Transfer the processed mixture to a bowl, and stir in the ham, roast pork, yellow cheese, gherkins, and chives. Mix thoroughly.

Fill the hollowed-out loaf with the mixture, using the handle of a wooden spoon to compact the filling firmly.

Butter the end slice well and replace, wrap the loaf tightly in foil, and refrigerate for 4 hours, preferably overnight.

Slice the loaf with a sharp knife into 1-inch pieces to serve.

Mish-Mash (Hoppel Poppel)

Thrifty Austrian housewives try to ensure that leftovers are consumed. Serve this for a light meal with potato dumplings.

- 4 TBS butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1½ cup cooked potatoes, diced
- 1 cup cooked (leftover) pork, turkey, chicken, or other meat
- 5 eggs
- 2 TBS cream or milk
- 1 tsp fresh dill, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 sprigs dill

Melt butter over low to moderate heat.

Sauté onions until soft.

(*continued*)

Stir in potatoes and pork, and sauté for 2–3 minutes.
Beat eggs with cream, dill, salt, and pepper.
Pour egg mixture over potatoes, meat, and onions.
Cover, reduce heat, and gently cook for about 5 minutes, or until eggs are set.
Place under a hot grill for a few seconds to brown the top.
Transfer to a warmed plate.
Garnish with dill and cut into wedges.
Serve immediately.

Potato Dumplings (Kartoffelknoedel)

These are popularly served with any main dish.

2 TBS butter, softened
1 egg, beaten
2 ounces semolina
salt to taste
1 pound potatoes, cooked, peeled, and mashed
flour, as needed
2 quarts (or more) salted water, enough to a fill deep pot to the top

In a food processor, blend the butter, egg, semolina, salt, potatoes, and just enough flour to make a firm dough.
Remove dough and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
Meanwhile, bring salted water to a simmer.
Form dough into tennis-ball–sized balls; simmer for 10 minutes (do not let the water boil or dumplings will be tough).
Drain and serve with any meat dish.

Vanilla Cookies (Vanille Kipferl)

These shortbreads are a favorite with coffee.

⅔ cup butter, diced
1 cup flour
⅓ cup ground almonds
2 egg yolks
½ cup powdered sugar
vanilla extract

In a food processor, mix butter, flour, almonds, egg yolks, and half the sugar just until the mixture forms a ball. (Mixing any longer will toughen the dough.)
Remove the dough, knead briefly, and chill for ½ hour.
Form into a roll, about 1-inch thick.
Cut into ½-inch-thick pieces. Roll each piece out to 2 inches.

Form the *kipferl*: roll up each piece from one edge, then twist each corner around to form a crescent, like a miniature French croissant.
Bake at 350°F for 10–20 minutes, no more: do not let them brown.
Mix the remaining powdered sugar with vanilla.
Gently roll the baked *kipferl* in the sugar mixture while still hot. Be careful as *kipferl* tends to crumble.

AZERBAIJAN

A former Soviet republic sandwiched between Iran in the south, and Armenia, Georgia, and the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan is on the historic Silk Road linking eastern and western Asia. The terrain varies from coastal plain to rugged mountains and wide, fertile valleys. The climate is cool in the mountains and hotter in the coastal plain, ideal for a wide range of Mediterranean-type crops.

The population comprises mostly Azeris (who speak a language that mixes Turkish and Persian) and minorities of Armenians, Georgians, and other ethnic groups. The population is largely nondogmatic Muslims. Azerbaijanis are noted for being long lived (many over 100 years old), which is attributed to their healthy diet of yogurt, apricots, and fresh foods.

Azerbaijani cuisine is rich and diverse, influenced by Greek, Arabian, Persian, Turkish, and Russian elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, *bulghur* (cracked wheat), breads (flat and leavened).
- Meat, particularly lamb, with plenty of fat preferred (all parts, including innards and trotters); also pork, beef, chicken, fish.
- Vegetables: pumpkin, squash, other gourds, cabbage, eggplant, cucumber, carrot, chili/sweet pepper, potato, tomato, pickled vegetables, vine leaves.
- Fruits: grape; cherry, quince, fig; melon, watermelon; apricot, pomegranate, mulberry, walnut, chestnut, other nuts.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, tomato, chili, pepper, yogurt, mint, parsley, dill, cilantro, tarragon, basil, saffron, cumin, coriander, fennel, caraway, many other spices; pomegranate syrup, barberry, *sumakh* (sour purple berries of the sumac tree), Russian-influenced mayonnaise; grape vinegar and garlic sauce.

Typical Dishes

- Most characteristic dish is *dolma*—rice-and-meat-stuffed vegetables (eggplant, grape leaves, cabbage), fruit (quince, apple), fish and big pieces of meat.
- *Plov* (flavored rice, or pilaf) with meat, fruits, almonds, sesame seeds; the rice is cooked separately from the rest of the ingredients.

- Home-baked breads: in rural villages, housewives take prepared dough to be baked in public bakeries. Common breads are thin flat breads (*lavash*) and round flat breads (*churek*).
- Variety meats: beef liver roll (fried chopped liver mixed with nuts, rolled up, chilled, then sliced); calf's foot or pig's trotter jelly (*cholodets*); fried beef brain.
- Chicken stuffed with rice and garlic mayonnaise.
- *Stolichnay* salat: chunks of sausage, potatoes, eggs, and chicken in a mayonnaise sauce.
- Thick soups made of fatty lamb, flavored with garlic, cherry plum, saffron, yogurt, and greens (*dovga*); pea with meatballs (*kyufta boshbaz*).
- Drinks: tea; wine; fruit juices—grape and mulberry (*dosha*), pomegranate (*narsharib*), mixed fruits with saffron and honey (*sharbat*); water; *ayran* (salted drinking yogurt).

FENNEL

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily. Tea is drunk at any time of the day, sometimes with sweet or savory pastries.
- Due to lengthy Soviet influence, Azeris generally set the table European style.
- No major distinction between meals, though only one meal a day may include a heavy meat dish. Otherwise Azeris eat as much meat as possible.
- Formal meal for guests has several courses, beginning and ending with black tea. Served with tea are *lavash* and various sweet preserves—cherries, mulberry, quince. Next comes the rice dish (*plov*). In between comes more tea. Then comes grilled meat (*shashlyk*), or, along the coast, fish (sturgeon, salmon, herring). A thick soup follows, usually of yogurt and greens, believed to ease digestion of fatty foods. Dessert is usually a sweet drink of mixed fruit juices with basil seeds, saffron, and honey, called *sharbat*.
- Men often eat at teahouses and restaurants, or during hunting and fishing trips, with their friends.

Flavored Rice (Plov)

This is one of the hundreds of local variations on Persian *pilaf*. Serve before a meat course.

4 cups rice
16 cups water
1 heaping tsp salt
1 cup butter, melted
1 cup onion, minced
2 pounds mutton or lamb, cubed, or a mix of mutton or lamb and beef, turkey, or chicken (the aroma of the mutton or lamb is critical to the dish)
1 cup stock
⅔ cup prunes, pitted and chopped
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp cloves
½ tsp saffron threads, soaked in ½ cup warm water
salt and pepper to taste
1 pound frozen brioche or croissant dough, defrosted
½ cup toasted almonds or walnuts

(*continued*)

Soak rice in water and salt for at least 3 hours or overnight.
Place in a pot and bring to a boil.
Cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes until half done. Remove from heat, drain, and reserve.
Heat ¼ cup butter. Sauté the onions until golden. Remove and set aside.
Next, quickly brown the meat on all sides.
Add broth, fried onions, prunes, cinnamon, and cloves; simmer until tender, about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
Meanwhile, prepare the rice: in a heavy saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, or a Dutch oven, heat ¼ cup butter over low heat.
Spread the brioche dough evenly to cover the bottom of the saucepan.
Add the rice. Cook, covered, for 1–1½ hours.
From time to time, open the rice pot, and stir in a bit of the remaining melted butter mixed with the saffron water, until all has been incorporated into the rice.
Mound the rice on a warmed platter. Adorn with pieces of mutton, prunes, and nuts, and serve.

Yogurt and Greens Soup (Dovga)

Not only are peas an essential dish for New Year, but this soup is also popularly served after a fatty meat dish. It is believed that the yogurt and greens aid digestion.

2 cups fresh peas (or dried split peas soaked in hot water for 4 hours)
2 cups yogurt
4 TBS flour
1 cup onions, minced
1 pound spinach, chopped
⅔ cup cress, or other fine greens, chopped
⅔ cup fennel root and leaves (*finocchio*), chopped
¼ cup butter (optional)

Simmer peas until half done (2–3 minutes for fresh peas, 30 minutes for dried). Set aside.
Whip the yogurt with the flour. In a saucepan, bring the yogurt mixture to a boil, then simmer, stirring slowly for 5 minutes.
Add the reserved peas and onions; bring to a boil.
Add spinach, cress, and fennel; simmer for 3–5 minutes. Do not stir.
Remove from heat, and allow to stand for 1 or 2 minutes, uncovered.
Stir in butter for a richer taste, if desired.
Serve hot after a meat dish, or as part of the New Year meal.

Dumpling Soup (Dyushbara)

A hearty soup that is often eaten by men, in particular, for breakfast before working the fields or going out to fish or hunt. A time-saving and convenient

alternative to making the dumpling dough is to use ready-made square wonton wrappers.

Stock

4 pounds mutton or beef bones, cracked
2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
1 large onion, quartered
1 bunch cilantro, chopped fine
salt and pepper to taste
3 quarts water

Place all ingredients in a large pot.
Bring to a boil, then simmer, covered, on low heat for 1–2 hours.
Skim froth from the surface if necessary.
Serve hot with dumplings.

Dumplings

½ pound flour
2 eggs, well beaten
1 cup water

In a food processor, mix flour, eggs, and water to a stiff dough. Add more water if necessary.
Remove dough. Knead on floured board for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Let rest for 30 minutes.
Roll out dough quite thinly. Cut into 2-inch squares.
Place 1 tsp filling in the middle of each dough square.
Fold over to make a triangle.
Bring the bottom corners of the triangle up to form a single peak. Pinch together to seal.
Place in simmering stock for 5–10 minutes, or until done.
Dyushbara can be made very small so that four or five can be spooned at one time.
To eat, dip into a sauce of wine vinegar with minced garlic.

Dumpling stuffing

1 pound ground mutton (or beef, turkey, or chicken)
1 onion, minced
½ cup fresh cilantro, minced (or fresh mint)
salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients; let sit for 10 minutes.

Fat Mutton Kebab (Lyulya Kebab)

This is possibly the most commonly eaten meat dish in Azerbaijan. The mutton tail fat keeps the kebabs moist. If using beef, make sure it is not too lean. Serve as the main dish for dinner.

1 pound ground mutton (beef, turkey, or chicken)
1 ounce mutton fat, preferably from the tail (substitute oil if using turkey or chicken)
1 small onion, minced
3 stalks spring onions, minced
4 TBS fresh parsley, minced
4 TBS fresh basil, minced
¼ cup flour
salt and pepper to taste
1 onion, sliced fine
1 large ripe tomato, sliced fine
¼ tsp sumac (powdered purple sumac berries, from Middle Eastern stores) or lemon juice with salt to taste

Blend mutton, fat, onions, parsley, basil, flour, salt, and pepper in a food processor until very smooth.
Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
Shape into small sausages. Mold around metal skewers.
Grill over hot charcoal (or under a hot grill).
Toss onion and tomato slices with sumac.
Unskewer kebabs into flat bread; surround with tomatoes and onions.

Stuffed Pancakes (Kutaby)

Kutaby are eaten for breakfast and snacks. Alternative fillings include ground mutton with onions, *lavashana*, and dried pomegranate seeds; or wild greens.

Stuffing

1 TBS oil for greasing
¼ cup spring onions, minced
⅔ cup spinach, chopped
⅔ cup sorrel, chopped (if unavailable, use more spinach plus 2 TBS lemon juice)
3 TBS mixed fresh cilantro and dill, minced
1 TBS *lavashana* (dried sour plum paste/jerky), chopped fine (or lemon juice)
salt and pepper to taste

Lightly oil a heavy frying pan.
Cook the onions for a minute. Add all other ingredients, stirring (without any more added oil) until well wilted. Remove from heat.
Add *lavashana*.
Season to taste.

Pancakes

1 cup flour
¼ tsp salt
1 TBS butter, melted
1 egg, beaten
½ cup water
beaten egg or water for sealing
¼ cup warm ghee for sauce
½ cup *matsoni* (a fermented milk native to the Caucasus, available from Russian stores; or substitute a thick, sour yogurt or thick buttermilk) for dipping

In a food processor, mix flour, salt, butter, egg, and water to make a soft dough.
Remove dough. Knead on a floured surface for 10–15 minutes, or until dough is shiny and elastic. Let rest for 30 minutes.
Roll out ⅛-inch thick.
Cut out disks, about 6–9 inches in diameter.
Place filling on one half of the disk.
Fold to form a crescent. Seal edges with a bit of beaten egg.
Place *kutaby* on a lightly greased cookie sheet.
Brush lightly with ghee.
Bake in a preheated 375°F oven, for about 25–30 minutes, or until brown.
Arrange in a warmed dish and serve.
If desired, pour remaining warm ghee over *kutaby*.
Pass a bowl of *matsoni* for dipping.

Fruit Pilaf **(Shirin Pilau)**

Sweet rice dishes, such as this, are traditionally eaten on Novruz (the Azeri New Year).

½ pound rice
1 quart water
4 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
½ cup seedless raisins
½ cup dried apricots
½ cup dried plums (prunes), pitted
⅔ cup sugar

Boil rice in water, uncovered, until half cooked, for about 10 minutes. Drain rice, reserving the water.
Heat ghee in a heavy saucepan over low heat.
Add raisins, apricots, prunes, and sugar, cooking for 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add rice and ½ cup reserved cooking water.
Reduce heat to lowest possible, cover tightly, and simmer until rice is done, for about 20–25 minutes.
Let *pilau* rest for 10–15 minutes before serving.
Heap on a warm plate.
Serve surrounded by the *kazmag* (fried/seared crust from the bottom of the pan), considered a delicacy, so ensure everyone gets a piece of it.

Rose Petal Drink **(Ovshala)**

Roses are not just decorative, but they are also popularly eaten in the Caucasus or Iran. Historically, they have an important place in literature, poetry, gardening, and, inevitably, cookery.

5 cups water
petals from 3 full-bloomed scented roses (make sure they have not been chemically sprayed); old roses (damask, bourbon) are best
½ tsp lemon juice
3 TBS (or more) sugar

Boil the water. Add the rose petals and lemon juice.
Turn off heat at once, cover, and let stand for 6–10 hours.
Drain into a pitcher, and discard petals.
Add sugar to the rosewater and stir to dissolve (add a bit more sugar, if needed).
Serve chilled.

BAHAMAS

The Bahamas are a Caribbean island chain southeast of Florida, formerly a British colony until independence. It remains part of the British Commonwealth. The mostly flat terrain and tropical climate enable some raising of fruits, vegetables, and poultry, but most food is imported. The coasts give access to fish and seafood, including crayfish, which, together with salt, is a major item of export.

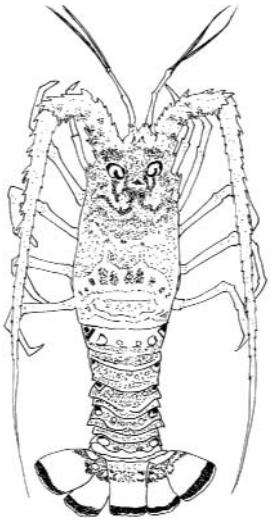
Bahamians are predominantly of West African descent, with some of European and East Asian origin. As in other Caribbean islands, Bahamian cooking incorporates elements from African, East Indian, European, and neighboring Caribbean cuisines.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, peas, fish, seafood.
- Common fish and shellfish: conch (see box "Conch"), rock lobster (actually crayfish, as it is clawless), octopus, shrimp, crab, red snapper, grouper, mackerel, whiting.
- Meat: pork, chicken, beef.
- Fruits: tropical fruits, including breadfruit, coconuts, bananas.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, celery, tomatoes, green onion, thyme, salt, black pepper, sweet pepper, paprika, curry powder, smoked bacon or ham.

Typical Dishes

- Fish or seafood, especially conch, crab, crawfish, and shrimp, prepared in various ways: baked, boiled, fried, grilled, or steamed. Added to salads, soups, and stews. Grilled or baked fish (red snapper, grouper, or others) are prepared with garlic, onions, tomatoes, thyme, and lemon/lime juice.
- Pig's feet, oxtail, or pig's head made into "souse," a spiced, preserved meat of British origin, eaten throughout the Caribbean.
- Pea soups with smoked bacon or ham.
- Johnnycake (cornmeal bread).
- Peas 'n rice, a one-dish meal of rice with pigeon peas, tomato, and bacon.



ROCK LOBSTER OR SPINY LOBSTER

- Curried banana.
- British-influenced sweets and desserts using local fruits: guava duff (pastry-wrapped whole guavas baked with meringue and butter sauce); coconut macaroon biscuits; orange cake; banana muffins; banana layer cake.
- Drinks: fresh coconut juice, lime juice. Locally made rum is added to native fruit juices for cocktails.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: traditionally, homemade cornmeal bread (johnnycake) with boiled or stewed fish, or corned beef, accompanied by grits. Nowadays, cornflakes and coffee, or fast-food joint pancakes or eggs and bacon. Coffee.
- The national dish of peas and rice, spelled peas 'n rice, is commonly eaten, at least once a day. Standard accompaniments are macaroni and cheese, potato salad and coleslaw (often all together). Peas 'n rice may also come with steamed or fried seafood or fish.
- Traditional weekend brunch is influenced by American southern cooking: boil' fish 'n grits [*sic*] is boiled fish served with grits.

CONCH

Conch (pronounced konk) is ubiquitous throughout the Caribbean, and is a large seashell whose fresh meat is "cooked" with lime juice and spices; or deep-fried (called "cracked conch"); steamed; or added to stews, chowders, salads, or fritters. It is also dried.

Ground Nut Soup

Serve this as a first course. If served with rice, this soup makes a main course for a midday or evening meal. Zucchini or other vegetable may be substituted for the eggplant, depending on what is in season. Bahamians call eggplants "garden eggs."

4 chicken legs
6 cups water
salt, pepper to taste
2 TBS peanut butter
3 tomatoes, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 small eggplant, diced
4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled, quartered

In a saucepan, simmer chicken in water with salt and pepper until tender, for about 25–40 minutes.
Remove chicken, discard skin, and dice or shred meat.
Stir in peanut butter to the broth; add vegetables and chicken.
Simmer for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Just before serving, garnish with egg slices.

Crab 'n Rice

This dish is usually served at midday or in the evening. This is a variation on the popular peas 'n rice, and uses crabs, which are very common in the Bahamas. This version uses the more economical imitation "crab legs" (available in most supermarkets).

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
1 red or green bell pepper, chopped
5 TBS tomato paste
salt, pepper to taste
½ tsp thyme
1 tsp paprika
4 cups water
2 cups rice
2 cups canned pigeon peas
24 pieces preformed "crab legs" (or 4 whole fresh crabs)

(If using fresh crab, separate bodies from shell, scoop out coral from the shell into a bowl. Discard shells. Quarter the bodies and crack the legs. Set aside.)
In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; fry the onion and sweet pepper until soft.
Stir in tomato paste, crab coral (if using fresh crab), salt, pepper, thyme, and paprika.
Add water, cover, and bring to a boil.
Add rice, peas, and crab legs (and bodies, if using). Bring to a boil.
Check seasoning.
Reduce heat to simmer until water has evaporated, for about 20–25 minutes.

Orange and Coriander Pork

The original main ingredient of this dish is wild boar or oxtail. Serve with rice and creamy baked cabbage (see the next recipe) for an evening main meal.

3 TBS butter
2 onions, sliced fine
2 pounds pork cubes
salt, black pepper
2 TBS tomato puree
1 cup orange juice
2 tsp orange rind, finely grated
10 coriander seeds, crushed, or 1 TBS ground coriander

In a saucepan, melt butter over medium heat; fry onions until soft.
Stir in pork, salt, pepper, tomato puree, orange juice, rind, and coriander.
Simmer, covered, until tender, for 50 minutes to 1 hour.
Serve hot.

Creamy Baked Cabbage

Cabbage is a commonly eaten vegetable in the Bahamas and throughout the Caribbean. Serve this with a meat or fish dish.

1 cabbage, shredded
4 TBS butter
2 TBS flour
1 cup milk
salt, pepper to taste
½ tsp nutmeg
4 stalks green onions, minced
1 cup grated mild cheddar cheese

Bring to a boil 6 cups of water in a big pot.
Add cabbage. When the water reboils, turn off heat. Drain cabbage and set aside.
Prepare sauce: melt butter in a saucepan over low heat.
Whisk in flour continuously until all the butter has been absorbed.
Add milk, continuing to whisk the mixture.
Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg.
Add more milk if necessary to make a smooth, thick sauce.
Remove from heat and mix with the cabbage.
Butter a casserole dish, and put in the cabbage mixture.
Sprinkle with green onions, nutmeg, and cheese.
Bake at 325°F for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Carrot Pudding

This dessert is typical of the baked puddings handed down from British colonial times.

⅔ cup butter
½ cup brown sugar
1 egg
½ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp cinnamon
1½ cups self-rising flour
¼ tsp baking soda
a pinch of salt
1 cup milk mixed with 1 TBS lemon juice
½ cup raisins, chopped
½ cup grated carrots, packed
½ cup cream for serving

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a mixer, cream butter, sugar, egg, and spices.
Blend flour, baking soda, and salt.
Add to creamed butter mixture in 3 portions, alternating with milk.
Fold in raisins and carrots.
Turn into a buttered 9 × 9 × 2-inch pan or baking dish.
Bake for 35–40 minutes or until done.
Serve warm, drizzled with cream.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain is a small island kingdom in the Persian Gulf, with a history of ancient Greek, Portuguese, and British presence until independence in 1971. Mostly consisting of rolling dunes and flats with some rocky outcroppings, it has mild and pleasant winters with very hot, humid summers. Aside from dates, and a few tropical fruits and vegetables, very few crops are grown. Hence most food has to be imported.

Being a Muslim nation, Eid-el-Adha (Abraham's Sacrifice), Eid-el-Fitr (End of Ramadan), and Muharram (New Year) are celebrated.

Bahrain cuisine is similar to that of other Middle Eastern countries. Sailors from Bahrain have sailed to India as well as other countries of the eastern Middle East, so the cuisine is influenced by these places. Migrant workers from the Indian subcontinent have also influenced local food preferences.

Foodstuffs

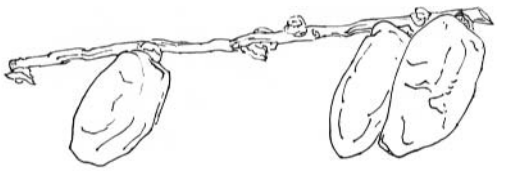
- Staples: rice, breads of wheat flour, noodles.
- Fish and seafood of all kinds; eggs, dairy products.
- Preferred meats are lamb and camel calf, chicken. Pork is not eaten by Muslims, and beef is not traditionally eaten.
- Dates, banana, citrus, mango, pomegranate; imported fruits such as grapes, apples.
- Potato, beans, lentils, and other legumes; peppers, eggplant, tomato, cucumber.
- Seasonings: spices (cumin, coriander, pepper), garlic, onion, cilantro.

Typical Dishes

- Flavored rice dishes similar to pilafs: spicy lamb or fish with rice (*machbous*, considered the most typical Bahraini dish), fish with rice in tomato sauce (*sayadiaya*).
- Grilled dishes: skewered chicken in yogurt or tomato sauce (*shish tahouk*).
- Baked dishes: sweet pastries (*um ali*).

Styles of Eating

- Western dining with individual place settings and cutlery is common when eating out.
- Traditional meals are eaten with the entire family sitting around a common dish of rice and meat or vegetables, eating with the right hand only. Male and female guests eat separately.



DATES

- Breakfast: usually bread and a hot drink (tea or coffee), with soft cheese or yogurt. Modern breakfasts tend to include cereals.
- Lunch: main meal, consisting of three courses—appetizers of cooked vegetables or raw salads (*mezze*); main dish of meat or fish with rice and more salads; sweet, coffee/tea.
- Snacks: meat-, cheese-, vegetable-, or sweet-filled pastries (*sambousa*); falafel; shawarma; kebab eaten with flat bread.
- Ramadan (Muslim month of fasting) foods tend to be sweet and salt free (to deter thirst). These are eaten in the evening.
- Many restaurants to suit all pockets in the capital city, serve all types of international food, including pizza and other fast food (burgers, beef hot dogs).
- Coffee is the most popular drink, consumed black with or without sugar. International bottled drinks are also popular.

Lentils, Macaroni, and Rice (Koshari)

This main meal is eaten with the fingers (of the right hand only) from a common dish. Koshari is popular throughout the Middle East as a fast food.

4 TBS oil
3 large onions, sliced
water as needed
1½ cups brown lentils, washed, soaked in boiling water to cover, drained
salt
2 cups hot (freshly made or reheated) cooked macaroni
2 cups hot (freshly made or reheated) cooked rice
6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
2 TBS white vinegar
6 ounces tomato paste
2 tsp cumin powder
¼ tsp cayenne powder
1 cup (or more) water

Heat 3 tablespoons oil and sauté onions until brown. Drain on paper towels. Set aside.

In a saucepan, boil lentils in water to cover until tender but not mushy, for about 15–20 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a saucepan; sauté garlic for 1–2 minutes until fragrant.

Stir in vinegar, tomato paste, salt to taste, cumin, cayenne, and 1 cup water.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10–15 minutes, until thickened. Add a bit more water if needed.

Meanwhile, assemble the koshari: in a serving dish or platter, place a layer of rice.

Top with a layer of lentils, followed by a layer of macaroni.
Pour the tomato sauce over, and garnish with fried onions.

Shrimp Balls (Chebeh Rubyan)

These shrimp balls accompanied by a spicy tamarind and tomato sauce are served as an appetizer, or as an accompaniment to rice. White fish fillet may be used instead of shrimp.

2 pounds uncooked shrimp, peeled, deveined, and drained
¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
¾ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp salt
¾ cup rice flour
4 TBS ghee (clarified butter, available from Indian and Middle Eastern stores; or substitute melted, cooled butter)
2 onions, chopped fine
2 tsp *baharat* powder (a spice blend available in Middle Eastern stores; or mix ½ tsp paprika, ¼ tsp each nutmeg, black pepper, coriander, cumin, cloves, cinnamon, and a pinch of cardamom)
2 TBS grated lemon rind
1 2-inch piece tamarind (or juice of ½ lemon)
2 cups warm water
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
¼ tsp chili powder
1 tsp sugar

In a food processor, process the shrimp to a paste with cilantro, turmeric, salt, and rice flour. Transfer to a covered dish and refrigerate until needed.
Heat 2 tablespoons ghee. Sauté onions until softened. Reserve one half of the onions for later use in the sauce.
To prepare the spiced onion filling: to the remaining onions in the pan, stir in 1 teaspoon *baharat* and rind. Cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat, and reserve.
Soak tamarind in 1 cup warm water for 15 minutes. Remove seeds by kneading the pulp with fingers. Pass the tamarind through a sieve, pressing with a spoon to extract all the juices. Discard the solids.
To prepare the sauce: In a saucepan, add the reserved fried onions.
Heat remaining 2 tablespoons ghee. Sauté onion until transparent.
Stir in the tamarind liquid, remaining 1 cup warm water, 1 tsp *baharat*, tomatoes, chili powder, and sugar.
Cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.
Meanwhile, prepare the shrimp balls.
Moisten your hands with water to prevent the paste from sticking to them.
Take 1 tablespoon of the shrimp mixture, and form into a ball.
Make a cavity with your thumb in the center, and fill with 1 teaspoon of the spiced onion.
Firmly press the shrimp paste around the filling to seal well.
Repeat with the rest of the ingredients, and remember to moisten your hands with water before rolling.

(*continued*)

Slip the shrimp balls into the simmering sauce.
Cover and cook over low heat for about 20 minutes.
Serve with sweet rice (*mulhammar*; see the recipe following).

Sweet Rice (Mulhammar)

This is not a dessert (which traditionally was rarely eaten as such) but a main dish. This is also served during the fasting month of Ramadan, in which case, omit the salt. (Salt stimulates thirst, and thus is not recommended when abstaining not only from food, but drink as well, during daylight.)

¼ tsp saffron threads
3 cardamom pods, cracked
2 TBS rosewater
2 cups basmati rice
6 cups water
1 TBS salt
⅓ cup sugar
¼ cup ghee (or melted, cooled butter)

Mix saffron, cardamom, and rosewater, in a small bowl. Set aside.
Rinse rice until water runs clear.
In a saucepan, bring to a boil the water and salt.
Add rice. Boil uncovered for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain.
Return rice to pan; stir in sugar and ghee.
Sprinkle rosewater and spice mixture on top of the rice.
Poke 3 or 5 holes in the rice to allow it to breathe.
Cover pan with a clean kitchen towel; replace lid tightly.
Return to cook over lowest heat possible, for about 20 minutes, until rice is tender.
Serve with prawn balls or meat.

Eggplant Salad (Uukkous Al-Badinjan)

Serve this vegetable dish as an appetizer (*mezze*), to be eaten with flat bread, or to accompany rice for a main meal.

2 medium eggplants, whole, with stalks intact
4 large cloves garlic, crushed
salt to taste
2 tsp olive oil
¼ tsp hot chili pepper
1 tsp sweet paprika
2 TBS lemon juice (optional)
2 TBS fresh parsley, minced, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Pierce the eggplants lightly with a fork, and bake for 30 minutes, until soft and slightly charred.

Remove from oven, slit the peel lengthwise, and scoop out all the flesh.
In a food processor, blend until smooth the eggplant flesh, garlic, salt, olive oil, chili pepper, paprika, and lemon juice (if using).
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve chilled or at room temperature, sprinkled with parsley.

BANGLADESH

Before India's independence in 1948, Bangladesh constituted half of the former Indian state of Bengal. Then it remained a part of Pakistan, until becoming an independent nation in 1971. It shares India's history of Persian, Arab, Mongol, and British cultural influences. Tropical Bangladesh is mostly flat plains with low hills. The Chittagong Hills in the east are covered by jungles and are deeply gullied. Although it suffers from severe annual floods and droughts, Bangladesh produces a range of tropical crops, as well as beef and poultry. Fish and shellfish are harvested from the Bay of Bengal.

Bangladeshis are predominantly Muslims, and so pork is not eaten. Influenced as India is by Arab and Persian use of many spices, however, Bangladeshi cuisine differs in its preference for fish and seafood, and a balance of spices, especially its five-spice mixture called *panch foran* (also *porch foron*). Bangladeshis are renowned for their love of good food, particularly, rich sweets, a legacy from Mogul (Mongol) rule.

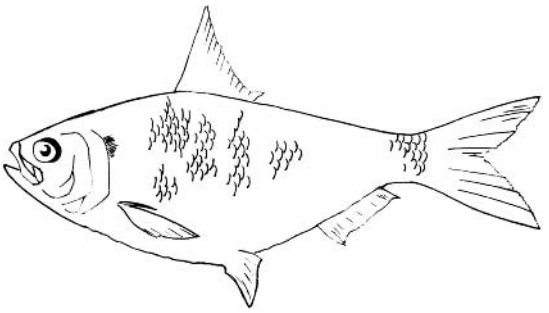
Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, fish (*hilsa*, a herring relative, is the preferred fish).
- Beef, chicken, seafood, lamb, goat, dairy products (yogurt, white cheese).
- Bitter gourd (*korola*), pumpkin, eggplant, green mango, green banana, green papaya, sponge gourd, long beans, okra, lentils, chickpeas.
- Mango, banana, *myrobalan* plum, melon, watermelon.
- Seasonings: *panch foran*—anise, cumin, fenugreek, black mustard, tiny coriander (*chotaswaz*, which is different from regular coriander); crisp-fried onion flakes (*tarka*); *garam masala* (a blend of coriander, cumin, cassia, cloves, cardamom, anise, mace, bay leaves, wild onion seeds, and chili). Sour taste (*tok*) in cooked food is desirable, which is obtained by using tamarind paste, green mango, or citrus juice.

Typical Dishes

- More than meat or poultry, fish and seafood form a major part of the daily diet. Fresh-water fish, such as golden carp, eel, catfish, hilsa (a fatty fish); sea fish such as pomfret; and shellfish such as squid and shrimp are plentiful. Curries such as *kalia*, *jol*, *bhoona*, and *korma* (names refer to consistency and flavoring,

ranging from soupy to dry) are common; thus, fish *kalia*, fish *jol*, beef *bhoona*, ground meat *korma*.
- Roasts: skewered spiced beef, chicken, or fish (*kabab*).
- Vegetable dishes: mashed vegetables (*bhoortha*), fritters and fried cutlets (*bhaji*), curried vegetables with bitter melon (*shukto*).
- Sweets: based on cream cheese (*chhana*) soaked in syrup, such as *rosgolla*, *rasmolai*, *sandesh*, *gulab jamun*; sweet rice, spices, and rosewater (*shirberanj*); spiced cream, honey, and nuts with vermicelli (*shir-e-faluda*).



HILSA

Style of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks (for those who can afford it).
- Breakfast: bread, omelet or fried egg, and tea with milk in urban areas; and *kachuri* (kedgeree of rice and lentils), flat pan-baked breads (*paratha*), and sweet "doughnut" balls of chickpea flour (*bundia*) in rural areas. On Fridays (the Muslim day of rest) leisurely, traditional breakfast, consisting of freshly made flat bread, chili and onion omelet, meat or fish curry, sweet halva, and tea.
- Lunch: rice, lentils, vegetables, and fish curry. Dishes are planned so that all tastes are represented, starting with bitter, salty, sweet, and sour.
- Dinner: same as lunch, but heavier; also includes dessert. Dessert is usually of two kinds: sour-sweet and sweet.
- Snacks: fried savory pastries filled with vegetables (*shingara*, *samosa*, *pitha*); vegetable fritters (*bhaji*, *pakora*); sweet spiral fritters (*jalebi*).

Fish in Mustard Sauce (Sorse Bata Diya Maach)

Fish are often made into quick-boiled curries called *jhol* and *kalia*, or seasoned with mustard paste as in this recipe. Serve with rice and side dishes of lentils, vegetables, pickles, or chutney for lunch or dinner.

salt, as needed
¼ cup (or more) mustard oil or vegetable oil
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 trouts (about 1 pound each), cut crosswise into steaks
1 tsp nigella seeds (optional)
2 TBS prepared mustard
1 green chili, minced (or 1 green bell pepper, diced)
1 cup water
½ cup fresh cilantro, chopped

Mix ½ teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon oil, and turmeric powder.
Rub over and inside fish, and allow to marinate for 10 minutes.

(*continued*)

In a skillet, heat about ¼ cup oil (or just enough for shallow frying) over medium heat.
Fry the fish, covered (to prevent splattering), until brown on both sides. Set aside.
In a wok, heat 1 tablespoon oil.
Stir in nigella seeds (if using), mustard, and chili or bell pepper.
Add 1 cup water and let boil.
Add the fried fish, cover, and simmer for about 5–8 minutes until heated through.
Stir in cilantro and simmer for another 5 minutes.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve immediately.

Chicken Jalfrezi

This spicy chicken stir-fry is quick and simple to make. Turkey, beef, or other meat can be used instead of chicken; the resulting dish would be named turkey jalfrezi or beef jalfrezi, accordingly. Serve with rice, and vegetables, lentils, or pickles for lunch or dinner.

3 TBS oil
2 onions (1 finely chopped, 1 thinly sliced)
2 cloves garlic, minced
½-inch piece ginger, grated
1½ 1b boneless chicken, cubed
2 cups mixed vegetables, diced or cut into 1-inch pieces (any combination of red bell pepper, cauliflower, green beans, carrot)
4 green chilies, seeded and finely chopped (or 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped)
½ tsp turmeric powder
salt to taste
½ cup yogurt
1 tomato, sliced

Heat oil over medium heat in a large frying pan or wok.
Fry chopped onions, garlic, and ginger until the onions are soft and golden.
Add chicken, sliced onions, mixed vegetables, chilies or bell pepper, turmeric, and salt.
Increase heat to medium high.
Stir-fry for about 10 minutes until chicken and vegetables are tender.
Add yogurt and tomato. Fry for two more minutes.
Serve with flat breads or rice.

Chicken Kebabs (Reshmi Kabab)

Kebabs are a popular lunch or evening dish. Serve with a vegetable dish, such as *masala subzi* (see the recipe following), and rice.

1 pound minced chicken meat
2 medium onions, sliced
1-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
4 cloves garlic, sliced
1 cup cilantro, chopped
½ tsp cumin
½ tsp white pepper
½ tsp *garam masala* (spice mix available from Indian stores)
1 egg, beaten
salt to taste
1 lemon, sliced; 3 stalks spring onions, sliced, for garnish

Blend together all ingredients, except for the garnish, in a food processor.
Mold the mixture into small sausage-shapes around metal skewers, two per skewer.
Grill over a charcoal fire or under a hot grill until cooked, but still moist, turning often.
Garnish with sliced spring onions and lemon, and serve.

Mixed Vegetables (Masala Subzi)

Vegetables are an important part of Bangladeshi cooking, and care is taken to balance colors and textures. Serve this dish with rice or flat bread for a light lunch, or as an accompaniment to meat or fish at the evening meal.

3 TBS oil
1 tsp whole cloves
1 cup carrots, cubed
1 cup tomatoes, cubed
½ cup long beans or green beans, cut into ½-inch pieces
1 cup zucchini, cubed
1 onion, finely minced
1 TBS ginger, grated
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp turmeric powder
salt to taste
½ cup water

Heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat in a wok.
Stir in the cloves and fry for about 30 seconds.
Turn off heat, remove cloves, and crush fine with a mortar and pestle. Alternatively, put into a small plastic bag, and crush with a rolling pin. Set aside.
In the same wok, sauté carrots, tomatoes, long beans, and zucchini for about 2–3 minutes. Remove and set aside.
Add 2 tablespoons oil to wok; heat over medium heat.
Stir in onion, ginger, garlic, and turmeric; fry until softened, for about 5 minutes.
Add tomatoes, beans, zucchini, salt, and water to onion mixture.
Bring to a boil, cover, reduce heat, and simmer until vegetables are tender, for about 20 minutes. There should be enough water to have a gravy. If not, add a bit of water and simmer for 5 minutes.
Sprinkle with clove powder, cover, and cook for another minute.
Remove from heat and serve at once.

Apple Halwa

Halwa is a popular sweet, most often made with carrots, and decorated with edible silver or gold leaf. Toasted pistachios or walnuts can also be used for garnish. Halwa can be served with vanilla ice cream.

1½ pounds Granny Smith, or other tart, crisp apple, grated
3 tsp sugar
juice of 1 lemon
4 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
2-inch cinnamon stick
6 cloves
8 TBS condensed milk
2 TBS seedless raisins
2 TBS butter
1 TBS vanilla extract
almond slivers to decorate

Sprinkle apple with sugar and lemon juice immediately upon grating to prevent browning. Mix well.
Heat ghee over medium heat in a heavy saucepan.
Add cinnamon and cloves, and after 30 seconds, add the apples.
Increase heat to high, stirring the apple mixture continually for 10 minutes.
Stir in condensed milk and raisins; continue cooking for a further 8–10 minutes, stirring the whole time, scraping bottom and sides of the pan.
When all the liquids have been absorbed, turn off heat.
Stir in butter and vanilla.
Serve hot, garnished with almonds.

Sweetened Yogurt (Mishti Doi)

This simple dessert is often eaten at breakfast or as a quick snack. With the addition of 1 cup chilled water and without the nuts, it also makes a refreshing drink with a meal.

2 cups unflavored yogurt
2–3 TBS honey or light corn syrup
½ tsp cardamom powder
5–8 saffron strands (optional)
½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg for garnish
4 TBS chopped pistachio or cashew nuts for garnish

Blend all the ingredients together.
Refrigerate for 1 hour or more to allow saffron (if using) to flavor the mixture.
Pour into four glass bowls.
Sprinkle with nutmeg and nuts.

BARBADOS

Barbados is a fairly flat, tropical island, the most easterly of the Caribbeans, and was first settled by the British in 1627 to grow sugarcane. It became independent in 1966. The tropical climate enables vegetables to be extensively grown, but sugar, molasses, and rum (distilled sugarcane juice) remain the major products.

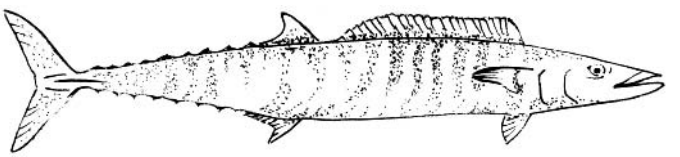
Barbadians, also known as Bajans, are mostly of African descent, with a minority of European, Asian, or mixed origin. Barbados retains many features of its British past in its cuisine, and also has elements of African, Spanish/Portuguese (from neighboring countries), East Indian, and Chinese cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Fish and seafood: conch, spiny lobster (crayfish), grouper, snapper, mackerel, flying fish, wahoo (large mackerel-type fish), salt fish (dried cod), smoked herring, and land crabs.
- Meat and poultry: goat, pork, chicken, beef, corned beef, salt pork.
- Vegetables: plantain, green banana, *pawpaws* (papaya), mango, sweet potato, squash, pumpkin, okra, cabbage, eggplants, beans, and other pulses.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, tomato, thyme, black pepper, cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, coconut milk, vanilla, ginger, and turmeric.

Typical Dishes

- Typical dishes are pickled fish, banana and sweet potato casserole, black (blood) pudding, chicken breast in papers, jug-jug (oats and lentils), and conkie (both sweet and savory).
- Roast pork or ham; meat and vegetable stews; fried and cured flying fish or dolphin.
- Cream soups.
- Dessert: British-style steamed sweet puddings, bread and butter pudding, lime meringue pie, cassava pie, coconut sweet bread, ginger-flavored cakes, and cookies.



WAHOO

- Beverages include juices from mauby and sorrel; lemonade; nonalcoholic malt drinks; ginger beer (which is nonalcoholic). Rum and beer are made locally.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and snacks.
- Breakfast is fresh tropical fruit or juice, banana bread, tropical fruit jam, fried flying fish and hash brown potatoes; tea, coffee or milk to drink.
- Lunch can be bought from roadside stands: macaroni pie, souse, cabbage and bacon salad or burger, eaten with fried plantain or breadfruit.
- Afternoon tea, including milky English tea, cakes, and pastries, is an important meal and social event.
- Major meal is in the evening, often of several courses. It may include fish or meat, accompanied by two or more of the following: peas and rice, fried plantains, sweet potatoes, fried green bananas, potato salad, or macaroni and cheese. Orange cake or coconut pie for dessert. A hot, sweet pudding (dessert) is usually served after Saturday night dinner, a reminder of Barbados's British past.

Pickled Fish

Serve this as a first course or as a light midday dish with fried bananas or fried sweet or regular potatoes.

2 pounds white fish fillets, deboned
1 cup water
½ cup vinegar
juice of 1 lemon or lime
7 cloves
¼ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp mace
½ tsp dry mustard (or 1 TBS prepared)
3 bay leaves
2 onions, chopped
salt
black pepper
1 romaine lettuce

First make sure that there are no bones left in the fish.
In a Pyrex or similar heatproof glass pan, place fish and all the ingredients except lettuce.
Bring to a boil over low heat; simmer covered for 10–15 minutes.
Turn off heat and let cool.
Refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight before serving.
Discard herbs and spices, but retain onions.
To serve, spoon pickled fish over lettuce.
Dress with green sauce (see the next recipe).

Green Sauce

This is usually served with pickled fish.

½ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup yogurt or milk with 1 TBS lime or lemon juice
1 TBS watercress or parsley, finely chopped
juice of 1 lemon or lime
1–3 drops hot pepper sauce (optional)

Mix all ingredients together. Serve cold.

Jug-jug

This is a traditional Christmas dish that can be served as a main dish for the evening meal. Accompaniments would be peas and rice and fried plantains. It is said that the origin of this dish is the Scottish haggis—a boiled sheep's stomach "sausage" of liver and kidney with oatmeal and seasonings.

2 cups dried peas or lentils
½ pound corned beef
½ pound bacon or salt pork
2 cups water
1 onion, chopped
3 chives, chopped
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup rolled oats, ground
2 TBS butter

In a saucepan, boil peas and meat in water until tender, for about 45 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 cup water.
Puree in a blender or food processor. Set aside.
Return to the pan the reserved water. Add onion, chives, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in oatmeal and simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in pureed meat and pea mixture; cook until everything is piping hot.
Top with butter before serving.

Banana and Sweet Potato Casserole

This is a good accompaniment for roast chicken, meat, or fried fish.

3 sweet potatoes
1 tsp salt
3 tsp grated orange rind
¼ cup butter, diced, divided into 3 portions
2 bananas, sliced crosswise
¼ cup sugar
juice of 2 oranges

Put sweet potatoes into boiling water and cook for about 5–7 minutes.
Remove from water and let cool.

(*continued*)

Peel and cut into ¼-inch-thick round slices.
Butter a deep 8 × 8-inch baking dish.
Place potatoes in a single layer.
Scatter ¼ tsp salt, 1 tsp orange rind, and ⅓ of the butter.
Cover with a layer of bananas. Scatter salt, rind, and butter over bananas.
Continue layering potatoes and bananas.
Top with sugar and the remaining butter.
Pour orange juice around the sides of the baking dish, being careful not to dislodge the butter and sugar.
Bake at 325°F for 30–40 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.
Serve piping hot.

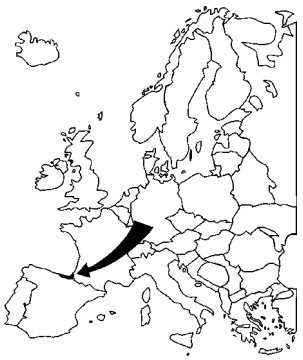
Pineapple Orange Sherbet

This is a common, refreshing dessert.

2 cups milk
¾ cup sugar
1 cup canned unsweetened pineapple, chopped
1 cup orange sections, without the white membrane, sliced
juice of 1 lime
juice of 1 orange

Make milk syrup: in a small pan, dissolve sugar in the milk over low heat. Chill.
Reserve a few pineapple pieces for garnish.
Mix fruits and juices together; chill for at least 1 hour.
Put into the bowl of an automatic ice cream maker. Prepare sherbet according to machine instructions.
(Alternatively, put mixture into a shallow tray to freeze the edges, for about 1½–2 hours.
Remove from freezer, and with a hand mixer or fork, beat mixture well.
Return to freezer and allow to freeze overnight. Serve garnished with pineapple pieces.)

THE BASQUES

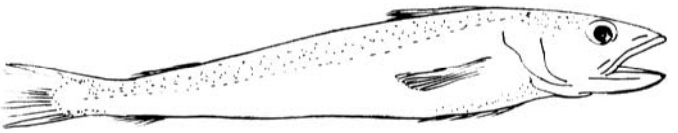


The Basque country is spread over both sides of the Atlantic border of Spain and France. The seven provinces (four in Spain, three in France) that make up the Basques are rugged and cool, and except for a few areas such as the Araba and Gipuzkoa river valleys, the soil is not conducive to agriculture. Hence, the sea is a major source of traditional food.

The Basques claim to be the descendants of the original people of Europe, and there are many cultural commonalities with Celtic Welsh and Scots. Traditionally, sheep herding and fishing were the main occupations, and the food reflects this. With many French and Mediterranean elements, Basque cuisine is famous for its diversity. It relies on top quality materials with simple but well-flavored sauces and is considered among Spain's most innovative regional cuisines.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: beans, potatoes, fresh and dried cod, lamb/mutton.
- Bonito tuna, hake, sea bream, many types of fish; seafood (squid, octopus, shrimps, etc.).
- Beef, pork, wild game (hare, venison, boar), chicken, other poultry (duck, pigeon, quail).
- Vegetables: broad beans, other beans (white haricot, black, red), green beans, pea, cabbage, onion, tomato, leek, chard, cardoon, spinach, wild mushrooms (many types), truffles.
- Fruits: apple, pear, grape, cherry, chestnut, walnut, almond.
- Dairy: many types of cheeses, milk, soured milk, notably from sheep.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, tomato, red bell pepper, herbs (parsley, thyme, oregano, rosemary), bay leaf, olive oil.



HAKE

Typical Dishes

- Vegetable dishes: chard leaves stuffed with ham and cheese, Victorian-style broad beans, potatoes with green sauce, beans with quail, fried peppers.
- Meat dishes: grilled ox steak or lamb, braised or stewed lamb/mutton, roast pork.
- Soups: most characteristic Basque dish is bonito tuna and potato soup (*marmitako*).
- Fish/seafood: prepared in various ways. With potatoes, seethed in milk; cod in garlic sauce, cod with red peppers and tomatoes; squid in its own ink with tomatoes and onions (*txipirones en su tinta*). Contemporary—sea bass with green pepper; baby eel salad.
- Desserts: clotted cream (*cuajada*), nut tarts, baked apples or pears.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Table settings, depending on class and environment, are European standard.
- Breakfast: light meal of coffee and pastry (or fritters called *txurros*), as in much of southern Europe.
- Dinner: a substantial meal of three courses, served around mid-afternoon (2–3:30 p.m.), consisting of an appetizer or soup; main meat, chicken, or fish dish with salad or vegetables; dessert; coffee. Wine drunk with meals.
- Supper is light, usually *pintxos* (*tapas*) or soup, bread and cheese or preserved meats such as sausage, bacon or ham (*txistorra*).
- Snacks: fritters (*txurros*); open-faced sandwiches (*montaditos*); fried squid or potatoes (*fritos*); pizza. *Pintxos*—little savories (Spanish *tapas*)—are eaten as snacks or appetizers, with wine and cider.
- Drinks: local sparkling white/red wine (*txocoli*), apple cider (hard, i.e., alcoholic), other wines.
- Basque gastronomic societies, exclusivist associations of men who would not cook at home, meet regularly to cook and discuss good food and drink.

Bilbao Fried Vegetables
(Pisto a la Bilbaina)

Eat this as an appetizer (*pintxo*), or as a light meal with buttered toast or with fried bread.

½ cup (or more) olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
3 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and diced
3 large, ripe tomatoes, chopped
3 zucchini, peeled and diced
3 potatoes, diced
5 eggs, well beaten
salt, pepper to taste

In a heavy skillet, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat.
Stir in onion, peppers, and a pinch of salt; fry gently until softened but not brown, stirring occasionally.

Stir in tomatoes and zucchini, cover, and continue simmering until tender.
In a separate pan, shallow fry potatoes in remaining olive oil over medium heat until slightly crisp, but still moist. Drain. (Use more oil if necessary.)
Add potatoes to simmering vegetable mixture.
Stir in beaten eggs, salt, and pepper to taste.
Cover, stirring occasionally, and continue to cook until eggs are set.
Serve immediately.

Leek and Potato Soup
(Porrusalda)

This is the standard and most typical Basque soup. Usually made on weekends, it may be eaten throughout the week.

½ cup olive oil
6 medium leeks, white parts only, chopped
½ pound sausage (chorizo, available in Hispanic stores)
3 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
3–4 sprigs fresh thyme
salt, white pepper to taste
1 garlic clove, minced
2 TBS flour
5 cups chicken stock
2 bay leaves
2 TBS fresh parsley
1½ cups bread cubes

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan.
Add leeks and sausage. Sauté until leeks are softened.
Add potatoes, thyme, salt, pepper, garlic, and flour.
Stir thoroughly until flour is incorporated.
Reduce heat to low.
Stir in chicken stock and bay leaves.
Cover and simmer for 25–35 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.
Stir in parsley just before serving.
Serve in individual bowls, topped with bread cubes.

Stewed Salt Cod
(Bacalao a la Biscaina)

Salt cod is the foundation of Basque economy, along with lamb. It is much esteemed, and there are hundreds of ways of preparing it. The most famous variety is *al pil pil*, in a garlic-flavored jelly, which is claimed to be very difficult to achieve at the first attempt. The recipe below is an easier one. Serve with potatoes or rice as a main dish, or as an appetizer on its own.

Basque fishermen may have been the first Europeans to arrive off the coast of North America, when they discovered the cod banks off Nova Scotia in the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

2 pounds salt cod, soaked overnight in water, changing water at least 3 times; drained
¼ cup olive oil
2 medium onions, chopped
2 garlic cloves, sliced very fine
2 red bell peppers, seeded and sliced into strips
¼ cup tomato paste
½ cup water
½ cup parsley, minced fine

Discard cod skin and bones; cut into 2-inch pieces.
Heat oil over medium heat in a heavy skillet.
Sauté onions till light golden. Stir in garlic and peppers, fry for 1 minute.
Stir in tomato paste and water.
Cover and simmer over very low heat for 15 minutes.
Add cod and simmer for 25–30 minutes, or until the fish flakes easily.
Add parsley.
Serve with boiled potatoes.

Almond Drink or Sauce
(Intxaursalsa)

This can be served in a tall glass or cup as a hot or cold drink, and eaten with a sweet pastry. Or it can be chilled, in a bowl, for dessert. This can also be made with walnuts.

2½ cups almonds, preferably freshly shelled, skins removed
6 cups milk
6 TBS sugar, or to taste
Rind of 1 lemon, optional (only the yellow part)
1 cinnamon stick

In a blender or food processor, grind almonds with 2 cups milk until very fine.
Gradually blend in sugar and the remaining milk.
In a saucepan, simmer almond mixture with rind (if using) and cinnamon for 1 hour over lowest heat possible.
Turn off heat; discard cinnamon and rind.
Taste and add more sugar, if desired.
Serve hot, or refrigerate for at least 1 hour, covered.

Intxaursalsa and Ice Cream

4–8 scoops ice cream (any flavor)
4 cups chilled almond sauce (*intxaursalsa*)
2 cups fresh strawberries, blueberries, mulberries, or other berries
mint leaves, toasted flaked almonds, chocolate shavings (choose any two for garnish)

Place ice cream in glass dessert bowls.
Surround with almond sauce.
Distribute fruit over ice cream.
Garnish as you please.

Sweet Apple Soufflés

Apples of many varieties grow well in the Basque country's cool climate. Most apples are made into apple cider, a popular alcoholic drink. These sweet omelets from Donostia are served as snacks in the afternoon, or as dessert after a main meal. These are also good made with pears.

4 TBS butter or margarine, melted
4 TBS firm-packed dark brown sugar
2 tsp cinnamon
2 apples, Granny Smith or similar tart/sweet, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced into wedges
6 eggs, separated
⅔ cup cream
pinch of salt
pinch of baking powder
4 fresh lemon wedges
4 tsp raspberry or other fruit jam

Butter thoroughly four small baking dishes (about 5 inches in diameter).
Mix brown sugar and cinnamon; distribute among baking dishes.
Arrange apple wedges over the sugar and cinnamon.
Whip egg whites until stiff. Set aside.
Blend well the egg yolks, cream, salt, and baking powder.
Fold yolk mixture carefully into the egg whites.
Gently spoon batter over apples.
Bake in preheated oven at 400°F for 20–25 minutes, or until golden brown and test done.
Lightly squeeze a lemon over each soufflé, and keep the lemon on the side as garnish.
Top with 1 teaspoon jam.
Serve hot in the baking dishes.

BELARUS

This Eastern European country was originally settled by the Slavs and was later invaded by Mongols and Turks, part of a Lithuanian empire, and a Soviet satellite country until independence in 1991. Belarus (the name means "White Russia" and was often historically called "Little Russia," though originally named "Lita") has a culture that is similar to Russian culture in most respects. It still maintains ties with "Big Russia." The terrain is mostly flat, and with a cool, temperate climate, cold-hardy grains and sugar beets are grown.

The population comprises mostly Belarusians, with a minority of Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, and other ethnic groups. Belarusian cuisine has elements of Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Tartar, and Russian cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: sour black rye bread, potatoes, buckwheat, oats, barley.
- Beef, mutton, pork, chicken, goose, other poultry, freshwater fish, eggs, dairy products (cheese, sour cream), sausages (smoked, blood).
- Beans, peas, other legumes, cabbage, carrots, beets, turnips, mushrooms.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, pepper, vinegar, sour cream, dill, parsley, caraway. Cooking fat is lard.

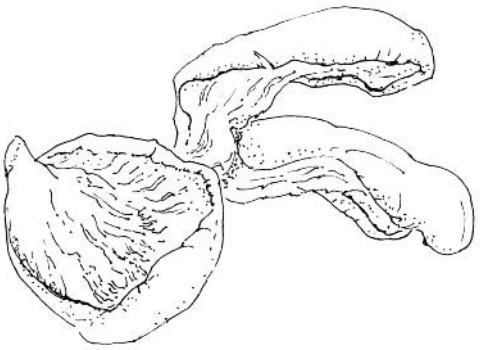
Typical Dishes

- Potato dishes: the most characteristic foodstuff is potato pancakes *draniki* (commonly known elsewhere as [Jewish] *latkes*). These are served plain or filled with various meats. Entire restaurant menus are devoted to potato dishes.
- Soups: beet and cabbage soups (*borshch*), cold sour beet soup (*haladnik*, also *khaladnik*), sauerkraut soup with mushrooms.
- Many types of salads of beets, cabbage, and other vegetables with eggs and sour cream are used as appetizers or as dishes for light meals.
- Italian-influenced dishes: sausages and preserved meats (*salceson*), lasagna-type pasta casserole (*lazanski*).
- Meat dishes: meat and sausage dip or gravy (*machanka*), beef strips stuffed with vegetables (*zrazy*), meat-filled dumplings (*kalduny*).

- Bean puree (*kamy*), buckwheat pancakes (*blini*), stuffed cabbage (*halubtsy*) are some typical dishes.
- Desserts: cakes, fruit pies (apple, berry), fruit compotes.
- Drinks: birch juice (locally tapped from birch trees), kvass, sour milk, herb teas, coffee, beer, rye vodka, rye and honey drink.

Styles of Eating

- Traditionally, families ate two meals a day together; in modern Belarus, people eat three meals a day, all of which are heavy on starch and fats.
- Traditional tableware were individual spoons and bowls; often a shared knife. Modern table settings are European standard.
- Thick soup stews often serve as the first and main dish; Belarusians like these to be thick and relatively smooth, almost porridge-like.
- Breakfast: *kasha* (porridge) of rye or buckwheat, eaten with salt, or in poorer households, honey.
- Lunch: light meal of potatoes or bread with cheese or sausage; sandwich of rye bread with cheese or sausage.
- Evening meal is a more substantial meal of three courses: appetizers or soups; bread or potatoes, pork or fish if available, cooked vegetables (peas, cabbage, carrot, black radish); fruit.
- Snacks: potato or buckwheat pancakes, sausages, cottage cheese.
- Restaurants, bars, and cafes serve international dishes and fast food (Chinese, Japanese, Continental, American) in the capital city.



OYSTER MUSHROOM

Country Salad

Serve this as an appetizer before a meal, or as a light meal on its own with fried potatoes or rye bread, and slices of cheese or sausage.

4 beetroots, boiled, peeled, and shredded
1 onion, sliced very fine
4 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, chopped fine
½ cup sour cream or mayonnaise
salt to taste

Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
Serve in a bowl.

Turnip Soup (Borshch)

This is commonly served as a first course for a main meal. Serve with slices of sour black rye bread.

3 TBS lard or margarine
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, diced
3 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
5 turnips, peeled and diced
5 TBS tomato paste
1 tsp sugar
2 TBS vinegar
salt, black pepper to taste
5 cups beef bouillon
2 beetroots, peeled and shredded
½ cup sour cream

Heat fat in a heavy saucepan. Fry onion until golden.
Add carrot, potatoes, turnips, tomato paste, sugar, vinegar, salt, and pepper.
Pour in stock; bring to a boil. Reduce heat.
Simmer until turnips and potatoes are soft (about 20–25 minutes).
Stir in beets; simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve hot in soup bowls.
Add a dollop of sour cream to each bowl.

Meat and Sausage Stew (Machanka)

Serve this stew with potato pancakes or boiled potatoes for a main meal.

3 TBS lard or oil
2 onions, chopped
1 pound boneless pork, diced
1 pound smoked pork sausage, diced
¼ cup flour
1½ cups water
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 bay leaves
salt, pepper to taste
2 cups sour cream

In a heavy saucepan, heat the lard over medium heat.
Fry the onions until golden brown. Reserve.
Brown the pork and sausage in the remaining fat (add more if necessary).
Stir in flour, mixing it thoroughly with the fat.
Gradually add water, stirring well to avoid lumps.
Add reserved onions, celery, bay leaves, salt, and pepper.
Simmer until meat is tender, for about 25–30 minutes.
Stir in sour cream.
Serve immediately.

Fried Meatballs (Bitotski)

This is a common main dish.

1 onion, grated
1 egg, beaten
½ cup butter
salt and pepper to taste

Mix meat, onion, seasoning, and egg.
Shape into long patties, about 3 inches long and 1 inch wide.
Heat butter in a heavy pan until froth subsides.
Fry *bitotski* in butter until well done.
Serve hot with potatoes or noodles.

Potato Balls (Komes)

Serve these with any meat dish, or on their own with a salad for a light meal.

½ pound salt pork (available from East European and some Italian stores), or fatty bacon, diced
2 onions chopped fine
4 medium potatoes, boiled, skinned, and mashed
salt to taste

Heat pork fat in a heavy skillet, stirring occasionally.
When fat starts turning golden, add onions.
Sauté until golden, and fat becomes light brown.
Turn off heat.
Add onions and crisped fat to potatoes. (Leave melted fat in skillet.)
Mix well. Taste and add salt if necessary (the salt pork or bacon may provide enough seasoning).
Shape mixture into golf-ball–sized balls.
Heat fat in skillet; when hot, add potato balls and fry until brown on all sides.
Serve at once.

Cranberry Dessert (Kisiel)

Berries, mostly collected from the wild, are a traditional part of the Belarusian diet. They are an important source of vitamins. Raspberries, blueberries, gooseberries, or strawberries can be substituted for cranberries.

½ pound cranberries, rinsed and pureed in blender
4 cups water
6 TBS sugar
3 TBS cornstarch, dissolved in ½ cup water

In a stainless steel pan, bring to a simmer pureed berries, water, and sugar.
Stir in cornstarch slurry.
Continue to simmer until thickened.
Taste and add more sugar if needed.
Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
Pour into individual glass bowls.
Serve with sour cream.

Belarusian Tea (Chai)

Another product of the forests is this herb tea. All ingredients are available from natural food stores.

1 quart boiling water, cooled for 1–2 minutes
1 tsp heather, dried
1 tsp St. John's wort, dried
1 tsp mint, dried

Place all herbs in a china teapot.
Pour in water.
Cover, and let brew for 5 minutes.
Drink hot, sweetened with sugar, honey, or berry jam.

Christmas Barley Porridge (Kuccia)

This is a traditional Christmas morning dish.

2 cups coarse barley, washed and drained
salt to taste
5 cups boiling water
½ cup butter

Put barley in a pot with salt.
Pour boiling water over it; simmer until thickened, and most of the water has been absorbed.
Stir in half of the butter.
Transfer to a buttered 8 × 8-inch baking dish.
Spread remaining butter on top.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 25–30 minutes, or until all water is absorbed, and the top is golden brown.
Season with more butter if desired.

BELGIUM

A western European country sandwiched between France and the Netherlands on the North Sea, Belgium has a history of invasion by the Romans, Vikings, Spanish, Austrians, Dutch, and Germans. Most of the country is a low-lying plain, and with the temperate climate, many kinds of vegetables, fruits, and livestock are raised for local use and export.

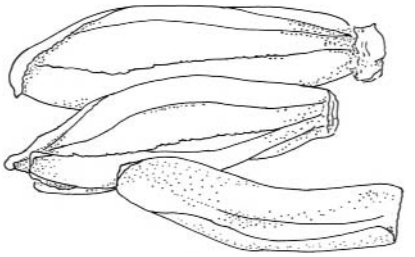
The population comprises Dutch-speaking Flamand/Flemish and French-speaking Walloons. Flemish food is similar to that of the neighboring Netherlands. Walloon food resembles that of northern France. Contemporary Belgian cuisine has elements of northern French, Dutch, and German cooking, with its own long tradition of fine and sophisticated eating. As well as being the real historical source of "French" fries, Belgium has more gourmet-rated restaurants than France.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potato, bread.
- Fish (herring, other North Sea fish), seafood (especially mussels) of many kinds; also imported fish and shellfish.
- Meats: beef, veal, pork, chicken, duck, goose, other poultry, eggs, game (rabbit, hare, venison, boar, pheasant). Preserved meats such as sausages, hams, bacon, and pâté are also eaten.
- Barley (most go to make Belgium's varied and excellent beers. Unsurprisingly, beer is the favorite drink).
- Leeks, endive (famous Belgian vegetable), carrot, cabbage.
- Dairy: milk, cream, more than 300 types of cheese.
- Cherry, pear, apple, chestnut, strawberry. (Cherries and berries go into the making of fruit-flavored naturally fermented beers.)

Typical Dishes

- Potato dishes: boiled, mashed, fried, or baked potatoes; leek and potato mash (*stoemp aux poireaux*).
- Mussel dishes: in wine, with parsley butter, baked with cheese topping (*gratiné*).
- *Waterzooi*: characteristic Belgian dish, of boiled meat, chicken, or fish with vegetables.



ENDIVE

- Stews of meat and vegetables cooked with beer or wine, such as *carbonnade*, rabbit with prunes and beer, and beef bourguignon.
- Cold meat dishes: rabbit, chicken, and veal terrine in aspic (*potjesvlees*), liver pastes (*pâté*).
- Fish dishes: eel in green sauce; freshwater fish in vinegar-flavored aspic (*à l'escavèche*).
- Baked foods: cakes, fruit tarts, rolls, croissants, waffles, cookies.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and many snacks.
- Place settings and the order of the meal is standard European.
- Breakfast: Continental style (coffee, bread, jam/butter), or bread, cheese, cold cuts, coffee.
- Lunch: bread, slices of sausage, ham, cheese, beer. Or much heavier with three courses, like dinner.
- Dinner: three or more courses—appetizer, soup, main dish, dessert, cheese, coffee. Desserts include waffles with whipped cream and fruits, mousses, ice cream, cakes, fruit tarts.
- Snacks: savory and sweet, eaten at any time. Common street foods include *pommes frites* (French fries) dipped in mayonnaise, curry, or bearnaise sauce. Other snacks are chocolates, biscuits, sweet pastries, cakes, cheese or sausage/ham sandwiches.
- Drinks: fruit juices, milk, coffee, tea, chocolate, many types of beer (some flavored with cherry and other berries), many types of wine.

"French" Fries (Pommes Frites) *with Mayonnaise*

Contrary to popular opinion (and name) French fries are a Belgian invention, and one still gets the best *pommes frites* in Belgium. They are available freshly made from street stalls, and normally served with mayonnaise and, sometimes, gravy. In the recipe below, the type of potato used will affect cooking time, and texture and flavor of the dish.

Fries

2 pounds potatoes peeled, sliced into finger-long strips ½-inch thick

oil for deep-frying

Rinse potatoes in fresh cold water. Dry well on paper towels.
Heat oil in a deep-fryer to 320°F. Put in just a handful of fries. (Frying too many cools the oil, leading to soggy fries.)
Fry for 4–8 minutes depending on the type of potato.
Stir regularly to prevent sticking.
Drain on paper towels and pat dry of excess oil.
Set aside for at least ½ hour.

Heat oil to 375°F. Again fry the potatoes for 2 minutes until crisp and golden brown.
The fries should be crisp on the outside and soft on the inside.
Serve with salt and homemade mayonnaise.

Mayonnaise

1 egg yolk
1 tsp sharp mustard
pepper, salt to taste
sugar to taste (optional)
1 cup olive oil (or light vegetable oil)
3 TBS vinegar or lemon juice

All ingredients should be at room temperature.
In a food processor, blend until smooth the egg yolk, mustard, pepper, salt, sugar (if desired), and half the olive oil.
With the processor running, gradually add the lemon juice and blend until smooth.
Next gradually add the remaining olive oil and blend until thoroughly incorporated.
Store in the refrigerator.
(Unlike commercial mayonnaise, this will not keep well.)

Flemish-Style Pork Chops (Côtes de Porc à la Flamande)

This is from the north of Belgium, as reflected by the generous use of butter. Serve this with boiled potatoes and other vegetables for dinner.

4 pork chops, each about 1 to 1¼ inches thick
salt, pepper to taste
2 ounces butter
2 TBS lemon juice
4 crushed juniper berries
rosemary sprig
5 sprigs parsley, chopped
4 large, tart eating apples, peeled, cored, and cut into ¼-inch slices
1 ounce butter, melted

Season chops with salt and pepper.
Heat butter in a heavy pan; brown chops gently on both sides.
Place meat in a shallow casserole.
Sprinkle with lemon juice, juniper berries, rosemary, parsley, salt, and pepper.
Cover with apple slices; drizzle with melted butter.
Cover and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 30–35 minutes, or until chops are done but still moist.
Serve immediately.

Cream of Watercress Soup (Potage au Cresson)

This is a traditional soup from Limbourg, a town in Walloon Belgium. Serve as a first course with bread and butter.

1 onion, finely chopped
1 leek, white part only, finely chopped
1 ounce butter
1 pound potatoes, peeled and diced
2 bunches watercress, chopped
3 pints chicken stock
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup cream

Sauté onion and leek in butter in a large saucepan for 2–3 minutes.
Add potatoes, watercress, and stock.
Bring to a boil and simmer for 45 minutes.
Cool slightly, then blend until smooth in a blender or food processor.
Return soup to saucepan. Season.
Add cream; cook for another 3 minutes, but do not let it boil.
Serve hot.

Eggs and Leeks (Hachis de Poireaux)

Leeks are great favorites, and feature in many dishes, such as this appetizer or salad. Serve this with crisp crackers or bread.

2 TBS olive oil
2 pounds leeks, white part only, rinsed, dried, and chopped
juice of 1 lemon
salt, pepper to taste
2 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled and chopped
1 TBS mayonnaise
1 TBS French mustard
1 TBS capers

Heat olive oil in a saucepan. Sauté leeks gently for about 8–10 minutes until softened.
Place in a shallow dish. Dress with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Cool.
Mix eggs, mayonnaise, mustard, and capers.
Spread egg mixture over leeks; chill for at least 2 hours.

Fried Fish Balls (Beignets de Poissons)

This dish is from Brussels, the capital. Serve as an appetizer, or with a salad, bread, or potatoes as a light meal.

Fish balls

1 pound cooked fish fillet, deboned and deskinned
1 pound potatoes, boiled, peeled, and mashed
1 clove garlic, minced
2 TBS chopped parsley
2 TBS chopped chervil
2 TBS chopped chives
2 TBS softened butter
2 egg yolks
salt, pepper to taste
oil for deep-frying

Mix together all ingredients except oil.
Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
Roll the mixture between floured hands into large marble-sized balls.
Place balls on a flat plate or tray.
In a deep fryer or frying pan, heat about 3 inches of oil to 350°F.
Dip each ball in batter and slip into hot oil. Fry until golden.
Fry only a few at a time so that the temperature of the oil does not go down.
Remove and drain on paper towels.
Serve with mayonnaise.

Batter

⅓ cup flour
pinch of salt
1 TBS olive oil
¾ cup soda water (or ¼ tsp baking soda dissolved in ¾ cup water)
whites of 2 eggs, beaten stiff

Blend thoroughly flour, salt, oil, and soda water.
Cover and leave at room temperature until required.
Just before batter is to be used, fold in egg whites.

Ghent Cheesecake (Plattekaastarte)

Ghent is a famous Flemish town that was an important mercantile center in the Middle Ages.

Crust

2 tsp yeast
1 tsp sugar
¼ cup water, lukewarm
¾ cup milk, lukewarm
1 egg, beaten
1 pinch salt
¼ cup butter, melted
2½ cups flour
⅓ cup applesauce

In a food processor bowl, sprinkle yeast and sugar over the water; leave in a warm place until frothy.
Add the milk, egg, salt, butter, and flour, processing only until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove the dough, and knead for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Cover with a damp towel; let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about 1 hour).
Butter a 10-inch round spring form pan.
On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to fit the bottom and sides of the pan.
Ease the dough into the pan, and spread the applesauce at the bottom.
Spoon the cheese filling over the applesauce.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 50 minutes, or until golden.
Leave to cool in the oven with the door open.

(*continued*)

Filling

2 eggs, separated
1 cup cottage cheese
½ cup macaroons, crushed
⅔ cup sugar
¼ cup almonds, ground
¼ cup vanilla sugar (or ¼ cup sugar mixed with 1 tsp vanilla extract)

Beat egg whites until stiff; reserve.
In a food processor, mix egg yolks and cottage cheese until smooth.
Add macaroons, sugar, almonds, and vanilla sugar.
Gently fold in beaten egg whites.

BELIZE

Belize, a colony of Spain and then Britain until independence in 1981, lies south of Mexico on the Caribbean Sea. Its subtropical flat terrain and low mountains are ideal for bananas (the country's major export) and other tropical fruits and vegetables. Fish and shrimp are harvested from the coast.

There are several ethnic groups—Maya, Garifuna (mixed African and Amerindian), East Indian, Chinese, North American, and European—but more than half of Belizeans are mixed European or Creole. The cuisine combines elements from Spanish, British, African, East Indian, Chinese, Amerindian, and other Caribbean islands' cuisines.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, corn, cassava, potatoes.
- Chicken, fish, seafood (conch, spiny lobster, shark), pork, gibnut (a relative of the guinea pig), turkey, wild game.
- Plantains, beans, peas, cabbage, squash, cucumber.
- Fruits: banana, citrus, mangoes, coconut, other exotic tropical fruits.
- Seasonings: garlic, basil, black pepper, paprika, hot pepper sauce, ginger, curry.

Typical Dishes

- Rice and beans are most commonly eaten, served with fried or stewed chicken, fish or pork, with side dishes of potato salad or coleslaw and fried plantain.
- Creole-style fish cooked in coconut milk (*seré*) with rice, or similar dish, Garifuna-style, served with grated plantain (*hudut*).
- Spanish-style chicken or pork in stews and soups (*chimole, relleno*), or marinated in vinegar (*escabeche*).
- East Indian–style curried split peas.
- Mexican-influenced dishes: fried corn tortilla with beans and cheese; corn and chicken stuffed pastry (*tamales*); fried corn pastry filled with beans, fish, or meat, served with an onion sauce (*panadas*).
- Caribbean-style conch salad, conch soup, and boil-up (seafood, pigtail, and vegetable stew).
- African-style cassava-based (*bambam*) and corn-based dishes (*dukunu*, steamed corn parcels with/without meat).

- Stir-fried vegetables and rice constitute typical Chinese-Belizean meals.
- Desserts: coconut-based pie, cake, ice cream, fudge, trifle; coconut and ginger sweets (*tablayta*, cut-o-brute); cassava or sweet potato puddings.
- Beverages: carbonated drinks, fresh juices of guava and other tropical fruits, coconut water (juice from young coconut).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day plus snacks.
- Breakfast: fry jacks (flat bread) or johnnycakes (soft round biscuits), fried beans with sausage and/or eggs; butter or cheese on hot johnnycake; coffee.
- Lunch and dinner: two to three courses, including rice and beans with stewed or fried chicken, fish, or pork; side dishes of potato salad or coleslaw, fried plantain; coconut- or other fruit-based sweet.
- Morning and evening meals for Mayan Belizeans: corn or flour tortillas, eggs or beans with coffee or chocolate. Lunch is chicken broth (*caldo*) with fresh tortillas.
- Snacks and "fast foods" sold at street stalls: tacos with shredded chicken, onions, cabbage, and cilantro; turnovers with ground beef (*garnaches*); chicken or beef barbeque served on hot flour tortillas.

Chicken and Pork Stew (Chimole)

This Spanish-style dish is originally colored red with annatto seeds (also called *achiote*), and flavored with a herb called *epazote*, or Mexican oregano. It is served either for lunch or for dinner with rice or tortillas.

1 pound chicken meat, cubed
pepper, salt to taste
1 pound ground pork
2 TBS paprika
1 tsp allspice
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp cloves
3 TBS oil
2 TBS oregano, preferably fresh
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 bay leaves
2 tomatoes (peeled)
¼ cup vinegar
2 TBS cornstarch
¼ cup water

Mix chicken with pepper and salt. Set aside.
Mix pork with paprika, allspice, cinnamon, and cloves.
Heat a skillet over medium heat, and when hot, dry fry the pork (i.e., without any oil) for 15–20 minutes, until it changes color. Remove and set aside.
Add oil to skillet; brown chicken for about 5–7 minutes.
Transfer chicken to a covered saucepan. Add pork, oregano, onion, garlic, bay leaves, tomatoes, vinegar, salt, and water.
Bring to a boil over medium heat, then reduce heat, simmer until meat is tender, for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
Blend cornstarch with water; stir into stew. Stir until thickened.
Continue simmering for 10 minutes.

Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve hot with white rice, or rice and beans, or fresh corn tortilla.

Johnnycakes

Originally called "journey cakes," these quick breads are made all over the Caribbean with many variations. They are often eaten piping hot with cheese for breakfast.

2 cups flour
2¼ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
⅓ cup shortening or butter, melted
½ cup coconut milk
about 2 TBS melted shortening for brushing

In a food processor, blend the flour, baking powder, salt, and shortening.
Gradually add coconut milk and process only until mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough and knead until smooth; roll out onto a floured surface and divide into 16 balls.
Press the balls to flatten slightly and prick tops with a fork.
Brush with melted shortening or butter.
Bake in a preheated 400°F oven for 15–20 minutes, or until done.
Slice and butter while hot.
Serve immediately.

Rice and Beans

This dish is eaten at least once a day by Belizeans, with their favorite meat dishes, such as stuffed baked chicken, stewed chicken (called "stew chicken" here), stewed fish ("stew fish"), fried fish, or meat balls. There is an important distinction between this dish and "beans and rice." The latter has the beans cooked separately from the rice, and served side by side in a dish. The usual accompaniments are potato salad or coleslaw and fried plantain.

2 cups canned kidney beans
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 onion, sliced
3 strips bacon, diced
2 cups rice, washed and drained
1 cup thick coconut milk
2½ cups water
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper

Put all ingredients in a Dutch oven or a thick stewing pan. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
Lower heat and simmer, covered, until all liquid is absorbed.

(*continued*)

While cooking, stir gently to mix ingredients.
Serve hot with a main dish.

Corn Parcels (Ducunu, Dukunu)

This is an African dish brought over by plantation slave workers and is eaten in many variations all over the Caribbean. This savory version is served in Belize with any meat dish.

1 cup frozen sweet corn kernels, defrosted, drained
1 small onion, chopped
1 small red bell pepper, chopped
1 cup coconut milk
½ cup butter, melted
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp thyme
½ tsp salt
1 TBS baking powder
2 cups cornmeal
8 squares of aluminum foil, 10 × 10 inches

In a food processor, puree corn, onion, bell pepper, and coconut milk. Add butter, pepper, thyme, salt, baking powder, and cornmeal.
Remove mixture and divide roughly into eight portions.
Spoon a portion in the center of a foil sheet.
Wrap securely by folding two opposite sides into a seam, then folding the two remaining sides over.
Secure with kitchen twine. Repeat with remaining ingredients.
Bring to a boil 4 cups of water in a big pot.
Add wrapped parcels.
Reduce heat to simmer for 1 hour.
Serve in the foil, each diner unwrapping the *dukunu* at the table.

Potato Pound

This sweet potato dessert is also known as potato pone.

1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and grated
1 tsp nutmeg
3 TBS fresh ginger, grated
½ cup raisins
1 cup brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla
2 cups evaporated or coconut milk
2 TBS butter, melted

In a large bowl, mix well all ingredients.
Pour into a buttered 2-quart baking dish.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 50–60 minutes, or until done.

BENIN

Formerly known as Dahomey, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Benin was a powerful West African kingdom. It was a French colony until independence in 1960.

The climate is hot and humid in the south, and semiarid in the north. The population comprises over 50 ethnic groups.

North and South Benin cooking are basic and center on different preferred staples: corn in the south and yams in the north. Both are eaten with peanut- or tomato-based sauces.

Foodstuffs

- Sorghum, cassava, yams, maize, and peanuts are major subsistence crops.
- Meat: goat, chicken, guinea fowl, and beef; some "bush meat" (anything caught in the bush or forests).
- Fish: river and marine fish (along the coast), both fresh (at source) and dried, salted, or smoked; shellfish, snails, eels, and frogs. Important source of protein for the south.
- A tofu-like cheese, called *wangash* or *wagassi*, is a common protein source in the north.
- Vegetables: greens such as *gnembue*, cabbage, beans and other legumes, peanuts, hot peppers.
- Fruits: tropical fruits (mango, papaya, pineapple).

Typical Dishes

- A special occasion stew, *ago glain*, from shellfish, tomatoes, onions, and hot sauce.
- Meat grilled on skewers is a very common dish, as are yams and plantains, either boiled, or fried as "chips."
- Cooked greens such as *calalu* (taro leaves) and *gnembue*.
- *Akassa*: cornmeal wrapped in leaves and cooked.
- *Lamounou dessi*: a sauce from fresh and smoked fish, vegetables, and chili peppers.

Styles of Eating

- Traditionally, people ate two meals a day, in the morning and at night, with snacks of leftovers in between. In modern times, it is common to eat three meals a day, if possible.

- In the past decades, Western utensils and European table settings have become commonplace.
- As in many other areas, families eat together on a mat on the floor, with central pots holding the food, from which diners help themselves with their right hand only.
- Breakfast may be leftover *pâte* (stiff porridge) or couscous from the night before.
- Lunch is usually a lighter meal since most people are at work.
- The evening meal is eaten by most families together and consists of a starchy dish and as many side dishes as can be afforded.
- Snacks of peanuts, fries, and fruit are eaten during the day.

Red Paste (Pâte Rouge)

This is a variation on the standard maize, cassava, or yam porridge, which is unsurprisingly called white paste (*pâte blanche* or *fufu*). *Pâte rouge* is served for the main meal.

2½ cups water
1 cup onions, finely minced
2 TBS tomato paste
1½ cups cornmeal
1 bouillon cube, crushed

Sauté the onions in a heavy pot until golden.
Add tomato paste and stir.
Add water and bring to a rolling boil.
Dissolve bouillon cube in some of the boiling water and mix into the boiling ingredients.
With the stock boiling, add cornmeal in a steady stream, stirring it vigorously with a wire whisk until all the lumps are dissolved and it starts to thicken.
Pour the *pâte* into a greased bowl and let cool.
Serve with a sauce or stew or on its own.

Cooked Taro Leaves (Calalu)

This (or something like it) may well be the origin of the *callaloo* of the Caribbean.

palm oil (or any cooking oil)
1 pound meat (meat, poultry, or fish in any combination), cut into bite-sized pieces
1 pound greens: any strong greens, such as kale, collard greens, spinach, or taro leaves (callaloo), stems removed, parboiled, drained
1 tomato, peeled and chopped
1 cup dried shrimp or prawns
1 cup okra, chopped
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 hot chili pepper, cleaned and chopped
salt, pepper, red pepper or cayenne (to taste)

Heat oil in a large pot.
Fry meat and onions until meat is browned.
Add all the remaining ingredients and enough water to partially cover.
Cover, reduce heat, and simmer on very low heat for two hours or more.
Serve with rice or *pâte de manioc.*

Pureed Peas

This is a common side dish for any meal.

1½ cups dried black-eyed peas
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
¼ cup butter

Pour boiling water over the peas, enough to cover by 2 inches, and soak overnight.
Drain the peas and slip off outer skins by squeezing between the fingers.
Simmer peas in water to cover for about 15 minutes in a covered pot.
Season.
Continue simmering until the peas are tender and most of the water is absorbed (an additional 5 minutes). If any liquid remains, drain it off.
Put peas in food processor or blender (traditionally, a mortar and pestle) and puree.
Return to pot and heat thoroughly over low heat, while beating in the butter with a wooden spoon.

Greens with Sesame (Gboman)

This dish is said to be made by a girl who wants to attract a boy's attention. By offering him this dish she declares her love.

½ cup palm oil
2 large onions, chopped coarsely
½ pound fresh tomatoes, chopped
2 ounces tomato paste
salt and black pepper to taste
4 garlic cloves, crushed
1 whole green bell pepper, cored and seeded
1 cube chicken stock, crushed
1 pound smoked fish, whole or fillets
½ pound crabmeat
½ pound smoked meat, cut into ½-inch cubes
½ pound fresh shrimps or prawns, shelled
½ cup crushed sesame seeds (or ⅓ cup tahina sauce)
½ pound gboman (a West African green), or fresh or frozen (defrosted) spinach, chopped

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a large pan.
Add onions and fry until golden.
Slice tomatoes and add them to the onions. Add tomato paste.
Stir-fry for roughly 5 minutes.
Add pepper, crushed garlic, half the remaining onions, green pepper, and the stock cube. Simmer until thickened and green pepper is tender.
Meanwhile in a separate pan, lightly brown the smoked fish. Remove from heat.
Add fish, crabmeat, smoked meat, and shrimps to sauce and let simmer for about 7–10 minutes, or until shrimp are almost done.
Stir in the sesame seeds and greens carefully so as not to break the fish. Leave to simmer until greens are done, about 5–7 minutes.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve with cassava or yam *fufu*.

Dahomey Fish Stew

This is a favorite dish in communities along rivers or the sea. In inland communities, vegetables are flavored with dried fish.

¼ cup flour
salt and black pepper to taste
2 cleaned firm-fleshed fish, about 1 pound each, cut into 2-inch slices
¼ cup palm oil (or mixed palm and vegetable oil)
2 onions, finely minced
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 cup fish or chicken stock
cayenne pepper to taste

Mix flour, salt, and pepper in a bowl.
Dredge the fish in the flour mixture.
Heat enough oil for shallow frying in a deep frying pan.
Fry the fish, turning it until it is golden brown on all sides. Remove, drain, and set aside.
Drain off the oil, leaving just 2 tablespoons to fry the onions until light golden.
Add tomatoes. Cook, stirring, for about 10 minutes.
Add the stock.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes.
Return the fish to the pan.
Season with cayenne to taste.
Simmer for 20–30 minutes.
Serve with *fufu* or rice.

Fritters

These are street snacks.

1 cup flour
1 tsp salt
4 ounces butter
4 TBS water
1 TBS vegetable oil
oil for frying
½ cup sugar
½ tsp cinnamon

Sift flour and salt in a mixing bowl, and cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal.
Add half the water and knead, adding more water and the oil until the dough holds together when pressed.
Place dough on a floured board and knead gently eight to ten times.
Roll out dough to a ¼-inch-thick rectangle.
Cut into strips about 2 inches long, or into triangles or circles.
Fry in 1 inch of oil in a heavy frying pan at 375°F, turning once, until lightly browned on both sides (8–10 minutes).
Drain each fritter on paper towel.
Dust with a mixture of sugar and spice.

Peanut Sauce

As in many countries of Africa, a peanut sauce accompanies many dishes and, among the poor, may be the only relish for the staple dish of *fulde* or *fufu*.

1 TBS oil
¾ cup chopped onion
2 TBS tomato paste
½ tsp chili pepper or cayenne powder
salt to taste
1½ cups water (or more depending on the density of the peanut butter you are using)
1 cube beef bouillon (equivalent to 1 heaping tsp soup powder)
¾ cup natural (unsweetened) peanut butter

Heat oil and sauté onions until light golden.
Add tomato paste, chili pepper, and salt, and sauté for a few minutes.
Add water and bring to a light boil.
Crush in bouillon cube.
In a separate bowl, stir some of the stock into the peanut butter until it is liquid and smooth. Add to simmering stock.
Simmer for 15 minutes or until thickened to your taste. Stir frequently to ensure the thick sauce does not burn.
Serve on rice or *fulde* or *pâte rouge*.

BERMUDA

Bermuda, an island group and a British colony since 1609, is a self-governing British territory. It has a hilly terrain and narrow coastal strip in some places. Only 20 percent of the land is arable but yields a range of subtropical vegetables and fruits. The coasts yield fish and shellfish.

Over 70 percent of Bermudians are of African descent or mixed descendants of Africans and Caribbeans; others are of European extraction. There is a small Portuguese community. Bermudian cuisine is British style with some African, Caribbean, and Portuguese elements.

Foodstuffs

- Fish—local wahoo (large game fish), rockfish, grouper, snapper, shark, imported salt cod. Shellfish—mussels, spiny lobster, conch.
- Vegetables: potato, sweet potato, cassava, Bermuda onion, hot pepper.
- Local fruits: loquat, Surinam cherry, strawberry, citrus, papaya.
- Beef, pork, chicken also eaten. Meat and many food products mostly imported from the United States.

Typical Dishes

- Mostly fish or shellfish, steamed, baked, broiled, fried, grilled, or made into chowder (sprinkled with Bermudian specialty hot pepper and sherry sauce).
- English-style stews, baked goods.
- Caribbean-style rice-and-beans (Hoppin' John) and johnnycake.
- Portuguese-style red bean soup.
- Wahoo steaks, grilled or fried, topped with almonds and banana.
- Shark hash or fritters, served as appetizer.
- Salted codfish, made into cakes, served in a white bun with mayonnaise, or boiled.
- Mussel pie, stew, or fritters.
- Cassava pie for Christmas dinner; now served as a special side dish.
- Sweet potato pudding, a popular lunch or dinner side dish.
- Bermuda onion dishes: pie, stuffed, casserole, or soup.

- Desserts: local fruits (loquats, guavas, bananas, Surinam cherries) served fresh with thick cream; baked in rum and brown sugar; or made into jams, jellies, pies, sherbets, or liqueur as ingredients for desserts.
- Beverages: tea, ginger beer (not a true beer), rum, ale.

Eating Styles

- European table settings and order of courses.
- Breakfast is scrambled eggs, bacon, sausages, or pancakes with coffee or tea. Traditional Sunday breakfast or brunch is boiled salt cod with boiled potatoes, onions, banana or avocado slices, with hard-boiled egg and tomato sauce.
- Lunch is usually hamburger and fries, or fish and chips, often eaten at a pub.
- British-style afternoon tea of scones and strawberry jam, usually from 3 to 5 p.m.
- Dinner, the heaviest meal, has two to three courses, starting with soup, followed by a main dish with meat or fish, with side dishes of vegetables, potatoes or rice or bread, and finally dessert.

Bermuda Fish Chowder

This is considered the representative Bermudian dish, usually made with whole rockfish or snapper fish heads to make a gelatinous stock. This is served for lunch with crusty bread and butter, or as a first course for dinner. At the table, sherry peppers—hot bird's eye peppers pickled in sherry—and dark Bermudian rum are traditionally sprinkled over the soup.

2 leeks
1 onion
10 stalks parsley
2 carrots
3 celery stalks
2 cloves garlic
3 TBS olive oil
2 pounds fresh white fish fillets (boneless)
2 TBS curry powder
2 TBS Worcestershire sauce
5 TBS tomato paste
3 TBS ketchup
2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
2 green bell peppers, quartered
2 red bell peppers, quartered
1 small green papaya, cubed (optional)
2 potatoes, cubed
6 cups water or fish stock
salt, pepper to taste
hot pepper sauce (optional)

In a food processor, finely chop (not puree) leeks, onion, parsley, carrots, celery, and garlic.
In a large pot, heat olive oil over medium heat; stir-fry chopped vegetables until soft.
Stir in fish and cook for 5 minutes.
Add curry powder, Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste, ketchup, tomatoes, bell peppers, papaya, potatoes, water or fish stock, salt, and pepper.
Simmer slowly for 1 hour; while cooking, break up fish into small bits.
Serve with a sprinkle of hot pepper sauce.

Banana Meat Loaf

Bananas are a Bermudian export and find their way into savory and sweet dishes. This meat loaf is a popular family dinner dish, served with pumpkin puree and mashed potatoes.

1 pound ground beef
1 semiripe, firm banana, mashed with juice of ½ lemon
1 small bell pepper, red or green, finely chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 tsp salt
1½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
½ cup grated Cheddar cheese
3 TBS ketchup
½ cup soft bread crumbs
2 eggs, beaten
6 strips streaky bacon

Mix well all ingredients except bacon in a bowl.
Line the bottom of a baking pan (9 × 13 inches) with three bacon slices.
Pack in meat mixture.
Cover with remaining bacon, tucking in the ends to cover the meat.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 1 hour or until done.
Let stand for 15 minutes before cutting.

Bermudian Puree

Pumpkin is a commonly eaten vegetable throughout the Caribbean and South America. Here the puree is made British style with cream and butter. Serve with banana meat loaf or stuffed Bermuda onions for dinner.

2 cups pumpkin, peeled and cubed
2 cups milk
1 tsp salt
1 cup white bread, without crust, cubed
3 TBS butter
½ cup fresh cream

In a large saucepan, simmer pumpkin with milk and salt until tender, for about 15–20 minutes.
Fry bread cubes in 2 tablespoons butter.
Add fried bread to pumpkin mixture; continue simmering for 5 minutes.
Remove from heat. Cool slightly.
In a food processor or blender, puree pumpkin mixture (without the cooking liquid). Strain and keep hot.
To serve, stir in cream and the remaining butter.

Stuffed Bermuda Onions

Bermuda onions are noted for their sweet and mild flavor and are a major export item. Bermudians refer to themselves as Bermuda Onions. Serve this as a

light supper or lunch dish with bread and butter or mashed potatoes, or as a side dish for dinner.

4 onions, peeled
4 TBS butter
3 ounces fresh mushrooms, finely chopped
6 ounces chicken breast, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
1 sprig parsley, minced
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup bread crumbs
½ cup chicken or vegetable stock

Prepare onions for stuffing: cut off the pointed tops. Cook in boiling salted water to cover for five minutes. Drain and let cool.
Carefully take out the middle portions of the onions and chop finely, leaving the outer shells whole. Set aside.
In a skillet, melt 3 tablespoons butter. Stir in the chopped onions, mushrooms, and chicken, and cook for 5 minutes.
Stir in tomato, parsley, salt, and pepper.
Fill onion shells with stuffing; place on a 9 × 13-inch baking dish.
Sprinkle with bread crumbs and remaining butter, melted.
Pour stock around the onions.
Bake at 350°F for 30–40 minutes, or until browned, basting frequently with stock.
Before serving, spoon baking juices over the onions.

Pawpaw (*Papaya*) *Flan*

Papaya, or *pawpaw*, as it is called in Bermuda, is a common vegetable and fruit. Flan or custard, when made with green papaya, is served as a savory side dish at lunch or dinner. Made with ripe fruit as in the recipe below, it is served with cream for dessert.

1 small, ripe papaya, cubed
2 eggs
1 cup cream
½ cup milk
¼ cup sugar
¼ tsp nutmeg, preferably freshly grated (plus extra for garnish)
1 tsp butter (for greasing)
4 custard cups
¼ cup half-and-half (optional)

In a food processor or blender, puree the papaya.
Add eggs, cream, milk, sugar, and nutmeg, mixing thoroughly.
Strain papaya mixture into buttered cups, filling them two-thirds up.
Set cups onto a baking tray with an inch of warm water.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 35 minutes or until done.
To serve, let cups cool for 1 to 2 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of each cup and unmold.
Serve sprinkled with freshly grated nutmeg, drizzled with light cream.

BHUTAN

Bhutan is a small, landlocked Himalayan kingdom between India and Tibet that has never been colonized by the West. Until a few decades ago, the country was virtually closed to foreigners. Bhutanese are mostly of Tibetan or Nepalese descent and predominantly Buddhist, but not strict vegetarians.

Bhutan's climate ranges from extremely cold in the snow-covered mountains, to temperate in the center and tropical in the southern plains. Although only 8 percent of the land is available for cultivation, several crops are raised. These include barley, buckwheat, and other cold-tolerant cereals; vegetables, apples and other temperate fruits. Tropical crops such as spices cardamom, chili, and lemongrass), citrus fruits and rice are grown in the south. Yaks, cows, and chickens are also raised.

Bhutanese cooking shows influences from neighboring Nepal, India, and Tibet.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: white polished rice (*ja chum*), Bhutanese native red rice (*eue*), chili (used as a vegetable), yak cheese.
- Pork, beef, chicken, yak meat, and hard cheese (*chugo*), dried meat, eggs; fish imported from India.
- Potato, cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, turnip leaves, radish; squash; wild vegetables such as mushrooms, fern fronds, and edible orchids.
- Citrus fruits, banana, apple, pear, plum, wild strawberry.
- Seasonings: mustard oil, chili pepper; *esay* (also spelled *eze*)—a sauce of chilies, onion, and cilantro.
- Drinks: buttered tea (*suja*); fruit juices in south; local brew from cereals (*ara*).

Typical Dishes

- Chili and cheese curry (*ema datshi*)—half chili, half cheese—is the fiery national staple side dish served at (almost) every meal.
- Vegetables in cheese or curry sauce: fern fronds, eggplants, wild mushrooms.
- Tibetan-style steamed dumplings (*momo*) of meat or cheese are most popular.

- Soups or stews of meat and vegetables (*tshoem*); curried meat and vegetables (*pa*).
- Noodles or filled pasta of wheat or buckwheat in soup.
- Rice-based special sweets (not desserts, but eaten at rituals) include white rice, butter, sugar, sultanas, and saffron (*desi*); sweet fried rice with butter.
- Snacks: potato chips, salty-sweet rice fritters (*shel roti*, in southern Bhutan).
- After meals, betel nut, lime paste, and wild pepper leaf are chewed by adults.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks; large helpings of rice and chilies at every meal. Rice and chili with a bit of vegetable are rolled into a ball between the fingers and eaten.
- Breakfast: rice, potato or vegetable curry, chilies; buckwheat or other cereal porridge; buttered sweet tea (*suja*) is the usual drink.
- Lunch: light meal of chili cheese curry (*ema datshi*), fried Indian flat bread (*paratha*), and red rice. Side dishes of green chili salad and red chili paste (*eze*), or noodles; dumplings.
- Dinner: main meal, consisting of red rice or white rice, vegetable stew (with pork, chicken, or beef if affordable), and chili cheese curry in western Bhutan. Hindu Bhutanese do not eat beef, but eat rice and curry dishes similar to Nepalese or Indian curries.
- Dessert is usually fresh fruit: watermelon, mango, papaya, banana.

Pork Noodles (Fing)

Chili peppers are a favorite ingredient in Bhutanese cuisine. They add zest to a mellow pork and noodle combination. Sweet bell pepper is substituted in the recipe given here. Let each diner add *eze* (Bhutanese salsa) at the table.

1 small package bean thread or cellophane noodles (about 4–5 ounces)
¼ cup butter
1 onion, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
1 pound boneless pork, diced
⅓ cup water
3 green chili peppers, or 1 green bell pepper cored, seeded, and cut into thin strips
salt and black pepper to taste

Soften bean thread noodles in a bowl of boiling water for about 5 minutes.
Drain and cut into 6-inch-long pieces.
Melt butter in a saucepan.
Stir in onion and fry until softened.
Add tomato, pork, and water.
Simmer over low heat until just tender, for 20–25 minutes.
Add noodles and chili or bell pepper.
Season to taste.
Simmer for about 10 minutes.
Serve hot.

Bhutanese Salsa (Eze, *also* Esay)

Although most dishes already use plenty of chilies, Bhutanese love to add more sting at the table with this sauce and, additionally, a raw salad of chilies with salt.

1 onion, chopped
3 green chilies (or more, as desired), cored and seeded (note caution about handling chilies)
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
4 TBS vegetable oil
1 TBS salt

Use rubber gloves to prepare the chilies. Avoid contact with the eyes and nostrils as chilies contain a powerful irritant.
In a blender or food processor, put all the ingredients and process until smooth. Be careful when opening the blender or processor jar. Turn your face away so as not to get the fumes into your eyes.
Keep in the refrigerator in a covered container for about 2 weeks.

Minced Chicken (Jasha Maroo)

This stew is served with white or red rice, accompanied by *ema datshi*, or vegetables in cheese sauce, for the main meal in the evening.

1½ pounds boneless chicken, diced
2 TBS oil
1 cup water
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 onion, finely chopped
3 green chilies or 1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced fine
1 large tomato, finely chopped
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp salt
½ cup fresh cilantro for garnish, chopped

Simmer chicken in oil and water to cover, for about 20–25 minutes until tender.
Stir in the remaining ingredients.
Simmer over low heat until the tomato and onion have turned into a thick sauce. Add more water if the stew gets too dry.
Serve over rice garnished with fresh cilantro.

Potatoes in Cheese Sauce (Kewa Datshi)

Potatoes were introduced into the Himalayan kingdoms in the nineteenth century and removed, to a large degree, the fear of famine. They have become immensely popular, appearing at almost every meal in various guises. Potatoes

are also made into chips, which are popular snacks. Potatoes in cheese sauce is served as a main dish to go with rice at lunch, or with other dishes at the evening meal. Instead of potatoes, other vegetables such as eggplant, pumpkin, or okra are also used.

1 TBS oil
¼ cup red or other onion, chopped
4 potatoes, cubed about ½-inch
1½ cups water
1 tsp salt
⅓ cup cheese, cubed (any mild cheese)
½ tsp chili powder (or to taste)

Heat oil over medium heat in a covered saucepan.
Stir in onion and sauté until translucent.
Add potatoes, water, and salt. Cook covered until potatoes are tender.
Add cheese and chili powder and stir once.
Add up to ¼ cup (not more—because this dish should be fairly dry) boiling water if the potatoes start sticking to the pan.
Serve at once.

Buckwheat Dumplings (Hapai Hantue)

Buckwheat, which grows in rough and cold terrain, was a major staple in Bhutan until the introduction of the potato. Buckwheat is often made into pancakes, noodles, and porridge. This dish is served as a main dish at the evening meal.

Filling

1 pound bok choy, quartered
3 TBS poppy seeds
¼ tsp Szechuan peppercorns
2 garlic cloves, peeled
1-inch piece ginger, peeled
1 small red or other onion, quartered
½ cup crumbled or grated cheese
1 tsp chili powder
¼ tsp salt
4 ounces ghee (or melted butter)

Blanch bok choy in boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain and squeeze dry.
Grind poppy seeds and Szechuan peppercorns in a mortar or food processor.
Add garlic and ginger, then onion, into food processor and chop fine.
Add the bok choy, poppy seed mixture, cheese, chili powder, salt, and ghee; process just until combined, for about 10 seconds, but not pureed.

Dumplings

2 cups wheat flour
1 cup buckwheat flour (if not available, substitute wheat flour)
1 cup water
flour, for dusting

(*continued*)

Mix flours and water in a food processor.
Mix only until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough and knead well for 10 minutes until smooth.
Buckwheat doughs are always very heavy and stiff. Form into a ball and let rest for at least 30 minutes, covered by a moist towel.
Knead again briefly, and divide the dough into 4 portions.
Take one portion, and cover the rest with a damp towel to keep moist.
Between floured sheets of plastic wrap or wax paper, roll out the dough $\frac{1}{8}$-inch thick, dusting with extra flour to prevent sticking (a pasta machine will be very useful for this).
Cut the rolled out dough into 2 × 4-inch rectangles.
Fill each rectangle with 1 tsp of filling.
Brush edges lightly with water and fold over to seal, pressing edges firmly.
Place filled dumplings on a floured tray while rolling out the rest of the dough portions.
Drop dumplings a few at a time in plenty of simmering water. Let cook for 7–8 minutes after they float.
Drain and transfer to individual serving plates.
Serve at once.

BOLIVIA

Bolivia is a landlocked country in the Andean highlands of South America. Its climate is varied: cold and semiarid in the Andes mountains and highland plateau, tropical in the lowland Amazon plains. The Andes mountains are the original home of the potato, with over 300 varieties grown.

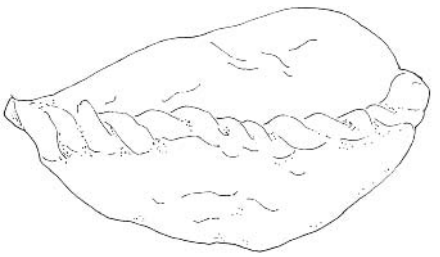
Bolivians are mostly Indian or mixed Indian-European, with only 15 percent European. Bolivian cuisine is a mix of Amerindian and Spanish elements. Bolivia and neighboring Peru and Ecuador share common foods, such as the potato and corn, and a hot peppery cuisine. There are distinct differences between Bolivian highland and lowland cuisines: highland cooking is peppery hot, often featuring corn and cheese. Lowland food comes with cooked banana and cassava.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potato (many varieties and colors), white corn, beans, rice, cassava, plantain, and a highland grain called quinoa, often added to soups and stews.
- Chicken, turkey, guinea pig, rabbit; beef in the south, where cow's tongue is a specialty. Dried meat, called *charque* (the origin of the word "jerky"), is often used in stews. Wild game meat is eaten in the tropical jungle areas.
- Fish: freshwater fish (eaten near the two lakes Titicaca and Poopu).
- Fruits: avocado, custard apple, prickly pear, banana, mango.

Typical Dishes

- A typical snack is *salteña*, a larger version of the *empanada* found all over South America. *Salteñas* are considered typically Bolivian: filled with beef or chicken, vegetables, olives, raisins, and egg, they are a complete meal.
- Substantial stews are common, accompanied by two or more of these staples—potatoes (fried or boiled), cassava, corn on the cob, and fried banana.
- Potatoes, boiled or fried, fresh or freeze dried, are ubiquitous. Freeze-dried potatoes are unique to Bolivia



SALTEÑA

and neighbors Peru and Ecuador. They are often found with fresh potatoes in the same dish.
- Corn is often made into steamed pastries wrapped in cornhusks.
- Bread, sometimes made of rice flour, is often sweet, topped with cheese.
- Fresh peanuts, pureed smooth, are often made into soup with milk.
- A vegetarian dish enjoyed throughout Bolivia, but originating in the capital, is *plato paceño* (La Paz Dish): hot corn on the cob, draped with melting white cheese, accompanied by boiled potatoes and broad beans.
- Desserts include coconut sweets, ice cream, sweet pastries, and fritters.
- In the highlands, warm drinks such as tea made from *yerba mate* or ground purple corn (*api*) are popular. *Api* is served with plenty of cinnamon or cloves and lemon. Cold drinks are often made from fresh fruits, though soaked dried peaches make a unique juice. Drinks are also made of ground roasted peanuts or ground white corn and cinnamon. Fruit shakes are made with banana, strawberry, peach, mango, and melon. Cassava or corn are often fermented into a drink called *chicha*. In the countryside, *chicha* is not always alcoholic, and a white flag outside houses indicates *chicha* for sale.

Styles of Eating

- Breakfast is usually a sweet, purple corn-based drink called *api* and a cheese-filled pastry or fried dough balls.
- Lunch is an important meal. People try to eat at home with their families and take long lunch breaks. It usually begins with soup, followed by a main course.
- In the afternoon, people have tea or coffee with a meat- or cheese-filled pastry.
- Most families eat a light evening meal, such as soup with baked corn and cheese.

Baked Corn and Cheese (Humintas)

This is a simple version of the original steamed pastry wrapped in cornhusks. Adventurous cooks may wish to replicate the original by wrapping the batter securely in individual foil squares and steaming over a double boiler. Serve as a first course with soup or as a snack.

1 10-ounce package frozen corn, thawed and drained
¼ cup skim milk
1 cup yellow cornmeal
1 TBS sugar
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp anise seeds
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
2 eggs, beaten
4 generous slices cheese, Swiss or Mozzarella
½ tsp paprika

Spray a 9-inch baking pan with vegetable oil cooking spray.
In a blender or food processor, puree the thawed corn and milk until smooth.
In a large mixing bowl, stir together cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, salt, anise seeds, and cinnamon.

Add beaten eggs and the pureed corn, mixing well.
Spoon the batter into the prepared pan. Top with cheese and sprinkle with paprika.
Bake for 40–45 minutes or until done. Cool for 10 minutes before cutting into squares.
Serve with a meat dish such as *silpancho* (see the next recipe).

Bolivian Steak (Silpancho)

This makes a good main course to follow *humintas*. Have ready some cooked white rice as accompaniment.

4 round beef steaks
salt
pepper
1 egg, beaten
⅔ cup bread crumbs
¼ cup cooking oil

Garnish

4 medium potatoes, cut into strips
4 firm, not too ripe bananas, sliced
cooking oil for deep-frying
4 eggs
salt
pepper

Sauce

1 onion, finely chopped
½ large tomato, chopped
1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
1 chili, deseeded, minced
4 TBS olive oil
2 TBS wine vinegar
salt

First prepare the garnish: heat about 2 inches of oil in a deep-frying pan over medium heat and deep-fry the potatoes until crisp. Drain and set aside.
Fry the bananas until golden brown. Drain and set aside. Pour out the oil, leaving just a film.
Fry the eggs sunny side up, taking care not to pierce the yolk.
Season with salt and pepper. Drain, set aside, and keep warm.
Next prepare the sauce by mixing well all ingredients in a bowl.
Pound and then season the steaks with salt and pepper.
Dip into beaten egg, then coat liberally with bread crumbs.
Heat oil over medium heat in a frying pan and fry steaks until golden. Drain and keep warm until ready to serve.
Place each steak over a serving of cooked white rice. Arrange fried potatoes, bananas, and a fried egg alongside.
Spoon sauce around the egg. Serve at once.

Spicy Pork and Egg Stew (Fritanga)

This hearty stew is popular, served with boiled sweet corn on the cob (or kernels) and boiled potatoes in a deep plate. Add a spicy sauce at the table, as Bolivians do.

- 4 thick pork chops (with bone)
- 1½ cups water
- 3 TBS oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 1 TBS mint, minced
- ½ cup parsley, minced
- 1 TBS crumbled oregano
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- ½ cup ground cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup green onions, thinly sliced, for garnish
- 2 eggs, beaten (optional; for garnish)

Parboil the chops in a pot with water for about 10 minutes. Drain, but reserve the broth.

Heat oil in a frying pan and stir-fry all the other ingredients, adding them in the order as listed.

Add the pork and the reserved broth, adding water to make 2 cups if needed. Bring to a boil, lower heat, and simmer for 15–20 minutes.

Just before serving, quickly stir in the green onions and the eggs, and turn off the heat.

Spicy Sauce (Llajua)

This table condiment is customarily made with plum-sized chili peppers called *locoto* in Bolivia (*rocoto* elsewhere) and an herb called "killi" by the Quechua Indians. This unusual herb, also called *quilquiña* (*Porophyllum ruderale*) and said to taste like arugula, cilantro, basil, and rue combined, is part of the Quechua daily diet.

- 5 ripe tomatoes, sliced
- 2 green chili peppers, without seeds
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 TBS fresh basil leaves
- 1 TBS fresh cilantro
- 5–6 arugula leaves
- 1 tsp ground cumin (optional)
- 1 TBS olive oil

Blend all ingredients for a few seconds in a blender or food processor to get a very rough puree.

Serve with everything.

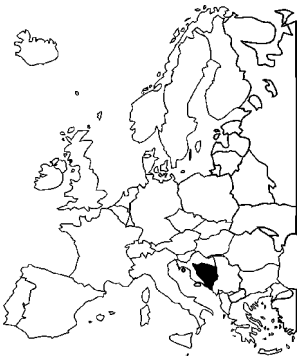
Baked Custard (Leche Asada)

This rich custard is popular throughout the country as a dessert.

6 whole eggs
2 cups milk
1 cup granulated sugar
ground cinnamon (optional)

Blend the eggs, sugar, and milk until well mixed.
Pour mixture into a 1½- to 2-quart baking pan.
Bake at 350°F for 1 hour.
Let cool.
Sprinkle with a bit of cinnamon before serving.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Formerly a part of Yugoslavia, now a UN protectorate on the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, the country, about the size of West Virginia, is mountainous, bisected by wide, well-watered plains and valleys. Summers vary from hot to cold, and winters from mild to cold, depending on altitude, enabling Bosnian farmers to raise wheat, maize, fruits, vegetables, and livestock.

About half the population are Bosniak Muslims, the other half Serbo-Croat Christians. A great deal of tension exists between the different ethnic groups, which led to a destructive civil war in the 1990s.

The food, in common with much of the former Yugoslavia, is heavily influenced by Turkish cooking.

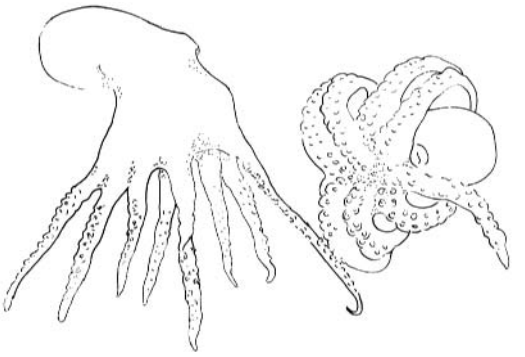
Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat bread, cornmeal, noodles, rice.
- Potato, peppers, tomato, cucumber, beans and other pulses.
- Grape, plum, apricot, pear, apple.
- Mutton, lamb (preferred), beef, pork (most Bosniaks are not strict Muslims), chicken, ducks, eggs, dairy products, sausages, preserved meats.
- Fish/seafood from the Adriatic: shrimp, shellfish, octopus.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, paprika, pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Flat breads: pita-like *somun*, soft *lepinja*; polenta-like cornmeal mush called *pura*.
- Meat dishes: grilled kebab; sausage (*cevapcici*, also *cevapi*); burger-like meat patties (*pleskavica*).
- Festive foods: lamb on a spit (*janjetina*); sweet butter bread (*pogaca*).
- Meat and vegetable dishes: casserole of ground beef and potato or eggplant (*musaka*); layered meat and vegetables (*Bosanski lonac*); lamb stewed with spinach and onions.
- Turkish-style pastry (*burek*) filled with potato (*krompirusa*), spinach (*zeljanica*), or cheese (*sirnica*).
- Soups: bean; chicken, or veal with okra (*begova corba*).

- Vegetables stuffed with meat and rice: pepper or zucchini (*dolma*); stuffed grape or cabbage leaves (*sarma*).
- Side dishes of pickled cabbage; simple salad of tomato and onion. Yogurt often comes with meals.
- Desserts: fruit; rolled pancakes with sweet cream cheese filling; apple pie (*jabukovaca*) or other fruit-based cakes; nut and honey pastry (*baklava*).
- Drinks: fruit juices (including juniper berries, rose petals, elderflower); strong sweet coffee; yogurt drink; bottled fizzy drinks; local wine and millet beer (*boza*); homemade brandy (*rakija*) of plum, cherry, apple or pear.



OCTOPUS

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day, lunchtime being the most substantial, usually consisting of two or three courses.
- Breakfast: bread with jam or honey, soft white cheese; hot tea, coffee, or milk to drink.
- Lunch: soup, meat or fish main dish, rice or potatoes or cornmeal mush, braised vegetables, fresh vegetable salad (summer) or pickled cabbage (winter), dessert.
- Supper: very light; leftovers from lunch or bread or potatoes or cornmeal mush, soft white cheese and/or cold cuts.
- Snacks are eaten at any time of the day. Cakes and savory pastries (*burek*) are both popular, most often washed down by thick, black, sweet coffee.
- People tend to eat out often, and cafés are a major socializing place, particularly for men.

Sausage and Beans (Grah)

Beans, peas, and other legumes are most commonly eaten. This is served for a midday or evening meal.

3 TBS vegetable oil
2 cans white beans, drained
2 cups fresh or canned tomatoes, chopped
5 shallots, finely sliced (or substitute 1 onion)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS parsley, minced
1 pound spicy sausage (*chorizo* or *kabanos*, available at Hispanic or Mediterranean food stores)

Heat oil in a heavy skillet.
Sauté shallots until tender. Add garlic and cook till fragrant.
Add beans, tomatoes, parsley, and sausages; simmer for 20 minutes.
Serve hot with crusty bread.

Beg's Soup

A "beg" was a Turkish provincial governor. Serve this soup as a first course for dinner, or for a light meal with rice, boiled potatoes, or bread.

4 pieces chicken quarters or legs
6 cups water
2 carrots, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
½ cup parsley, chopped
salt, pepper to taste
12 young okra, tops removed (do not slice okra unless you want a glutinous dish)
¼ cup cooked rice
4 eggs
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup sour cream

Simmer chicken, water, carrots, celery, parsley, salt, and pepper, until tender, for about 45–50 minutes.
Add okra and rice, simmer for 10 minutes.
Crack eggs one at a time, next to each other, over the soup.
Do not stir. Let yolks solidify, for about 5–8 minutes.
Turn off heat.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve hot.
Pass lemon juice and sour cream for diners to help themselves.

Meat Sauce Banja Luka Style (Banja Luka Chevap)

Banja Luka is a town is central Bosnia. Serve this dish with rice for a midday or evening meal.

3 TBS butter
2 pounds ground meat (beef or pork)
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and diced
½ cup parsley, minced
2 cups water
5 TBS tomato paste
1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
salt, pepper to taste
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips

Heat butter in a saucepan. Add meat and stir-fry briefly over high heat.
Stir in onion, carrots, and parsley, fry for 2 minutes.
Add water, tomato paste, tomatoes, salt, and pepper; bring to a boil.
Lower heat and simmer until meat is cooked and sauce thick.
Stir in red peppers, simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve immediately.

BOTSWANA

A large southern African country, entirely landlocked, Botswana is slightly smaller than Texas. Much of the country is scrubland, with the edges of the Kalahari Desert in the southwest. It has spectacular wildlife due partly to the Okavango swamp, an area that is fed by annual rains.

A British protectorate until 1966 under the name Bechuanaland, Botswana has been a success story, fuelled partly by sensible use of diamonds, its major natural resource.

The majority of the population are Tswana—largely cattle herders and farmers—and Herero and San (Bushman) constitute a small part. The diet is similar to that of neighboring South Africa and Zimbabwe. Sorghum, maize, beans, and meat (for those who can afford it) dominate the cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: maize, in the form of stiff porridge, is the basis of every meal.
- Pumpkin, squash, cucumber, tomato, various greens, cabbage, beans.
- Fruit: some orchard fruit, watermelon, melon, baobab fruit.
- Meat: eaten at special occasions, as Tswana are reluctant to slaughter their cattle. Beef, goat, chicken are also consumed.
- A variety of foods collected from the wild and considered great delicacies, most notably, *mopane* worms.

BAOBAB FRUIT

Typical Dishes

- The staple is a stiff cornmeal porridge variously called *sadza* or *nsima* (see Angola for the box "African Staple"), which is eaten traditionally by hand, dipped into a stew or sauce.

- Meat stews.
- Cooked pumpkin.
- Drinks: English tea, with sugar and milk; rooibos tea (bush tea); bottled fruit juices; bottled carbonated drinks; beer, both home-brewed and commercial.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day for those who can afford it.
- Most families in urban areas eat around a table, following modified European table settings. In the countryside, people eat sitting on a mat around a common dish of staple and side dishes.
- Snacks such as chips, peanuts, or *mopane* worms are sold on the streets.

Pounded Meat (Seswaa)

When affordable, meat dishes such as this are usually served with the staple *fufu* for a main meal.

1 pound beef (any boneless cut)
water to cover
1 large onion, chopped
salt and pepper to taste

Place meat, onion, and seasoning in a pot.
Cover with water and simmer for about 2 hours until soft, skimming froth from time to time.
Drain liquid thoroughly in a colander and reserve.
Pound the meat with the flat side of a meat-mallet until flaky.
Simmer and reduce liquid. Thicken with a spoonful of flour to make a gravy.
Serve with *fufu* (see Angola for the box "African Staple") and thickened gravy.

Cooked Greens

This is a frequently made side dish.

1 pound spinach, washed and finely chopped
2 onions, sliced fine
2 tomatoes, sliced fine
1 bell pepper, sliced fine
½ cup water
2 tsp oil
salt and pepper to taste

Put the spinach, onions, tomatoes, and pepper into a pot.
Add water and oil.
Flavor with salt and pepper.
Cook covered for 20 minutes or until all water is absorbed.
Serve over *fufu* or rice.

Tomato Loofah

The loofah is an edible vegetable of the gourd family. Mature specimens are dried and seeded, and the fibrous "skeleton" is used when bathing. The young loofah has a tough angled skin and soft flesh, tasting somewhat like cucumber, a related gourd. It can be found at Asian greengrocers. Serve for a midday or evening meal with a meat dish and *bogobe* (see Angola for the box "African Staple").

3 TBS vegetable oil
2 onions, chopped
1 heaping TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 pounds small, green loofahs, peeled and sliced thin (or substitute zucchini)
1½ cups canned chopped tomatoes
salt to taste
1 cup water
2 tsp tomato paste
1 tsp sugar

Heat oil, and sauté half the onions until translucent.
Add ginger and garlic; stir-fry for 3 minutes.
Add loofahs, remaining onion, tomatoes, and salt.
Add water and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer until loofahs are tender, for about 5–7 minutes.
Stir in tomato paste and sugar; cook for a further 2 minutes.
Serve hot.

Mopane *Worms*

The most famous of Botswanan wild foods is the *phane* caterpillar of the emperor moth (*Gonimbrasia belina*), which feeds on the *mopane* tree. It is a protein-rich delicacy eaten as a relish or a snack. Also available dried and canned in hot sauce or tomato sauce, *mopane* worms (actually, caterpillars) are gathered in season from trees in the wild by most households (see box "Edible Insects and Other Land Invertebrates").

1 pound dried mopane worms
salt to taste

Wash the dried caterpillars thoroughly.
Rehydrate by soaking in water until soft, or overnight in the refrigerator.
Steam, or simmer in salted water for 10 minutes.
Serve with tomato and onion relish.
(Alternatively, shallow fry the drained and dried caterpillars until golden brown and stir into tomato and onion relish.)

Tomato and Onion Relish

Serve this with mopane worms or fried locust.

3 TBS oil
1 large onion, chopped fine
2 large tomatoes or 1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
salt, pepper to taste
chili sauce to taste (optional)

Heat oil and sauté onion until softened.
Sitr in tomatoes, salt, and pepper.
Cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes until thickened.
Stir in chili sauce if using.
Serve hot or cold.

Fried Locust (Tinjiya)

As in most countries afflicted by locusts, this agricultural pest has been made into a delicacy; particularly important if other sources of food have been consumed by the insect swarms.

1 pound locusts (or substitute small shrimp)
water to cover
oil for frying
salt and pepper to taste

Remove the wings and hind legs of the locusts (leave shrimp whole, removing legs if desired).
Simmer in a little water until softened, for about 5–8 minutes.
Drain and pat dry.
Add salt and pepper.
Heat oil in pan. Fry locusts until brown and crisp.
Serve with *sadza* (corn porridge; see Angola for the box "African Staple").

EDIBLE INSECTS AND OTHER LAND INVERTEBRATES

Insects, arthropods (spiders), and other land invertebrates are eaten in most areas of the world. They are rarely a staple and are often considered a delicacy. The most prominent of these are locusts (eaten throughout Africa and the Middle East), which are often the only thing people have to eat when fields are attacked by those pests. Other insect delicacies include white ants in Sudan, spiders in South America (eaten by forest tribes), silkworm pupae in Korea (sold from street barrows), grubs in Australia (a "bush tucker"), and beetles in Thailand. In the previous century, starvation forced many Cambodians to eat tarantula-like spiders, which have now become a famous rural delicacy.

BRAZIL

Brazil, the largest and the most populous country in South America, is almost as big as the United States. It was a Portuguese colony until independence in 1822. Its climate is mostly tropical; the south is temperate. Brazil's terrain and climate favor the production of coffee, a wide range of fruits, vegetables, and cattle. It is the world's biggest producer of coffee.

Brazilians are mostly Europeans (descendants of Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and German settlers) with minorities of Afro-American, Japanese, Amerindians, and other ethnic groups. Brazilian food is rich and diverse, mixing Portuguese, Moorish, other European, African, and Amerindian influences. The Minas Gerais region is famed for its chefs and distinctive cooking, called the Mineira style.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat bread, rice, corn, cassava (as manioc flour), beans.
- Vegetables: kale, yams, sweet potatoes, squash, peppers, cassava, beans, and peanuts.
- Soybeans, wheat, rice, corn, sugarcane, cocoa, peanuts, citrus fruits.
- Meat: beef, chicken, pork, and in the jungle, various hunted animals. Sun-dried meat, *charque* (jerky), is an important source of protein in Northeast Brazil.
- Fish: sea fish caught in the Atlantic, riverine fish from the Amazon and its tributaries.
- Manioc, the flour made from the cassava tuber, is used in many ways. Toasted manioc is an essential table condiment. Mixed with palm oil, the bright yellow meal produced (*farofa*) is served in a bowl and spooned by each diner over meat, poultry, or vegetables. Manioc is also used as a thickener for stews or in cakes.
- Brazil nuts, which grow wild, are often used in sweets and cakes.
- Portuguese food items such as dried cod, dried shrimp, olives, almonds, garlic, and onions are typically added to Brazilian dishes.
- German and Italian settlers in southeast Brazil contributed assorted cheeses and preserved meats (sausage, salami) to Brazilian food.

Typical Dishes

- Brazil's national dish is *feijoada completa*, a bean dish with assorted preserved meats. Many restaurants feature it for Saturday lunch. Jerked beef, smoked

sausage, smoked tongue, salt pork, spices, herbs, and vegetables are slowly cooked with the beans. Accompaniments are kale and orange slices, and for adults, sugarcane-based alcoholic drinks.
- The staple of rice and beans is commonly eaten with steak or chicken.
- Regional cooking differs. The Northeast (Bahia region) reflects African preferences for red palm oil (*dende*), okra, plantains, hot peppers, and coconut. The Southeast has more Portuguese, European, and Moorish elements, seen in *cuzcuz paulista*.
- African-influenced dishes: okra, shrimp, and pepper stew (*caruru*); bean and dried shrimp fritters (*acarajé*); chicken or seafood stew with coconut, dried shrimps, and palm oil (*vatapá*).
- Meat dishes: beef, widely eaten as steaks or skewered with other meats in a mixed grill called *churrasco*. In the Southeast, pork features in roast suckling pig and crisp cracklings of pork skin.
- Fish from the Amazon, including the feared *piranha* and its vegetarian relatives, are broiled, baked, or grilled, served with lemon or bananas and coconut milk.
- Snacks: toasted sandwiches filled with steak in the South; in the North, filled with tomato, ham, and cheese.
- Desserts are very rich, based on eggs and milk, reflecting their Portuguese heritage. These include *quindim* (coconut custard); sweet egg threads; *Romeu e Julieta*—fresh cheese and sweet guava paste (from classic dessert of quince paste and cheese in Portugal and Spain. The same combination is widely eaten throughout South America with hard or soft white cheese); sherbets and ice creams from exotic fruits.
- Drinks: juices (with or without milk) from various exotic fruits, berries, and palm fruits. *Guaraná*, a soft drink made with the juice of a caffeine-rich Amazonian fruit; beer; *cachaça*, *pinga*, and *aguardente*, potent drinks distilled from sugar cane.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast tends to be simple: milky coffee and a pastry or fried bread, or leftovers.
- Lunch is light and can be a snack of sandwiches or fried pies; can be a slightly more substantial meal.
- Dinner may be lengthy, multicourse (appetizers, soup, main dish and vegetables, dessert), with juices and beer, and ending with coffee.

Bean Fritters (Acarajé)

Beans are a major component of Brazilian food and may be eaten at all meals. This dish reflects an African influence, showing a similarity to a dish called *accra*.

2 cups canned kidney beans, drained
1 onion, chopped
1 chili pepper
salt
black pepper
oil for deep-frying
20 pieces dried shrimp

Puree the beans, onion, chili, salt, and pepper in a food processor.
Form into 20 small balls, pressing a dried shrimp partly into the center of each. (You should still see the shrimp.)
Heat oil over medium heat; fry balls in small batches until golden.
Drain and keep warm.
Serve hot as a first course, or as a snack.

Chicken in Nut Sauce (Vatapá de Galinha)

Chicken is commonly served for dinner. Serve this with a green salad and white boiled rice.

4 large chicken pieces (quarters or legs)
3 large cloves garlic, minced
juice of two limes or lemons
1 tsp salt

Sauce

1 cup chicken stock or water
½ cup dried shrimp
½ cup chopped almonds or cashews
2 cans coconut milk
1 cup fresh, white bread crumbs
6 TBS olive oil
2 onions, chopped (separate into 2 portions)
1 bunch spring onions, chopped (separate into 2 portions)
3 tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
2 small fresh red chilies (leave stalk intact, i.e., just wash and use whole)
2 TBS tomato paste
4 TBS palm oil (optional)
4 TBS fresh cilantro
4 TBS fresh parsley, chopped

Marinade the chicken with garlic, lime (or lemon) juice, and salt. Set aside.
In a blender or food processor, process the chicken stock, shrimp, nuts, 1 can coconut milk, and bread crumbs until smooth. Set aside.
In a stewing pan, heat 3 tablespoons olive oil.
Stir-fry one portion of the onion and spring onions until soft, for about 10 minutes.
Add tomatoes and chilies, stirring for 5 minutes.
Add chicken, tomato paste, chicken stock or water; simmer for 30–35 minutes until chicken is tender.
Transfer chicken to a dish and let cool.
Skin and bone chicken, chop meat coarsely; set aside.
Sieve chicken broth; set aside.
In a saucepan over medium heat, heat remaining olive oil; stir-fry remaining onions until soft.
Stir in processed mixture and broth from cooking the chicken.
Simmer uncovered for 15 minutes, stirring frequently until thick.
Stir in the remaining coconut milk, palm oil (if using), and the chopped chicken.

(*continued*)

Simmer until heated through.
Garnish with the herbs.

Mineira-Style Greens (Couve a Mineira)

This vegetable dish is a traditional accompaniment to *feijoada* and other dishes from the northeastern region of Minas Gerais. The original recipe is for kale, a green leafy relative of cabbage. Spinach or cabbage make good substitutes.

3 TBS pure olive oil
1 medium onion, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 strips smoked bacon, sliced fine (optional)
1 head green cabbage, leaves shredded (or 3 cups frozen spinach, thawed and drained)
salt, pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat.
Stir-fry the onion and garlic until softened, for about 10 minutes.
Stir in bacon.
Add cabbage or spinach; stir-fry for 15 minutes (or less for the spinach) so that the leaves have softened, but still retain their green color.
Add salt and pepper. (If using bacon, salt may not be needed.)
Serve hot.

Coconut Custard (Quindim)

Custards, derived from Portuguese originals, are common desserts.

1 cup shredded coconut
¾ cup sugar
2 TBS butter
3 eggs
½ cup skim milk

Blend all ingredients in a blender or food processor.
Butter a 9 × 9-inch glass baking dish; sugar the inside (similar to flouring a baking pan, only using sugar).
Pour the blended mixture into the prepared dish.
Put the dish into a large baking tray.
Pour an inch of very hot water into the large tray.
Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until dark brown.
Replenish with boiling water as necessary to ensure the tray does not dry out.

BRUNEI

Brunei was a very powerful kingdom on the island of Kalimantan, bordering Malaysia and Indonesia, that became a British protectorate in 1888. It became independent in 1984. Due to extensive petroleum and natural gas resources, Brunei is extremely prosperous, and Bruneians have one of the highest per capita GDPs in the developing world, entitled to free university education, medical care, and subsidized rice.

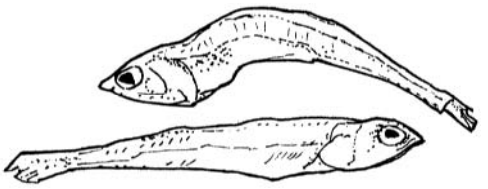
Brunei has hot, humid coastal plains with higher altitudes in the interior. Rice, tropical fruits, and vegetables, water buffalo and chicken are raised. Bruneians are predominantly Malay, with minority Chinese, Indians, and aboriginals such as the Iban (Dayak), who were famous headhunters. Malay Bruneians are predominantly Muslim, and thus eat no pork. Bruneian food is spicy and aromatic, very similar to Malaysian: an amalgam of Indian, Chinese, and Indonesian cooking styles.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice, vegetables, fish, seafood.
- Chicken, beef, water buffalo.
- Squash, long beans, eggplant, various green leafy vegetables, *petai* (pungent bean), young fern shoots.
- Banana, papaya, pineapple, watermelon; exotic tropical fruits such as durian, rambutan (similar to the lychee), and Brunei cherry (*asam aur-aur*, juicy, slightly tart red-yellow berry).
- Seasonings: coconut, chilies, many spices (cinnamon, fennel, cumin, coriander, turmeric, etc.), screwpine leaf (*pandan*), hot chili-based condiment (*sambal*), salted fish paste (*belachan*).

Typical Dishes

- Curried stews of beef, chicken, and fish, called *rendang*.
- Soups of chicken, beef, or fish with vegetables, called *soto*.
- Rice dishes: coconut rice (*nasi lemak*); fried rice (*nasi goreng*).



DRIED ANCHOVIES

- Vegetables: curried vegetables (*sayur lodeh*), *ulam* (mixed vegetable and herb salad).
- Chinese-influenced noodles: fried noodles (*mee goreng*), soup noodles (*laksa*).
- Indian-style dishes: *roti prata*—fried flat bread served with lentils and chili pepper sauce (*sambal*) or fish/chicken curry.

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals a day and snacks.
- The right hand only is used for eating and passing food according to Muslim custom.
- Breakfast: rice porridge; rice with curry; noodles (*laksa*); flat breads (*roti*); toast; tea or coffee.
- Lunch: Rice and side dish of vegetables, fish or meat; noodles; meat-filled pastry (*murtabak*).
- Dinner: Rice and two to three side dishes of soup, vegetables, fish or meat, all served at the same time. Dessert of fresh fruit or rich coconut-based sweet.
- Snacks: Spicy noodles, flat breads, sweet or savory pastries.
- Food in all public eating places is prepared according to Muslim food rules; all eating places have to be certified as serving "*halal*" food.

Vegetable Curry (Sayur Lodeh)

Vegetable dishes are most often served with fish or seafood added for flavor. Any vegetable in season can be used instead, ensuring a balance of textures and colors. This dish is traditionally served with pressed rice cubes (*lontong*). With plain rice, it makes a quick, light lunch or a side dish for the evening main meal.

Dried and fresh shrimp, as well as *belachan* (pressed salted fish paste, an original Malay flavoring), give this vegetable dish added flavor. Dried shrimp and *belachan* can be bought at Asian food stores. Anchovy paste can be substituted for *belachan*.

3 TBS oil
1 1-inch piece ginger, sliced thinly
2 TBS dried shrimp, soaked in water and pounded (optional)
1 cup fresh small or medium shrimp, shelled
1 can coconut milk
½ cup water
½ green cabbage, sliced into 2-inch pieces
15 French beans, sliced into 2-inch pieces
2 carrots or turnips, cut into strips
1 block firm soy bean curd, cubed
salt to taste

Spice Mix (Rempah)

15 whole cashew nuts
10 shallots or 1 small onion
2 cloves garlic
1 tsp chili powder (optional)

1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp ground coriander
1 TBS belachan or anchovy paste

In a food processor or blender, process the spice mix, adding 2 tablespoons oil if necessary, until smooth.
Heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat in a saucepan, and fry the spice mix until fragrant, for about 2–3 minutes.
Stir in ginger slices and dried shrimp (if using), for about 2–3 minutes.
Add coconut milk and water, mixing well. Bring to a boil.
Stir in vegetables, fresh shrimp, bean curd, and salt; simmer for about 10 minutes, or until the cabbage is cooked but still crisp.

Chicken Stew with Toasted Coconut (Serunding Padang)

Although fish and seafood are preferred, chicken is the second most commonly eaten white meat. This dish is served at the main meal in the evening, accompanied by white rice, cooked or raw vegetables, chili sauce, and other vegetable relishes or condiments (*sambal*).

4 large chicken portions, legs or quarters
1 cup water
1 2-inch piece ginger, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ onion, finely chopped
2 TBS cooking oil
¼ cup grated coconut, ground fine in food processor or blender
2 cups coconut milk
1 pandan leaf (optional)
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar (optional)

Spice Mix

1½ onions, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 2-inch piece ginger, chopped
1 2-inch piece galangal (optional)
1 dried red chili, reconstituted in warm water (optional)
2 fresh chilies (optional)

In a covered saucepan, simmer chicken with water, ginger, garlic, and onion until tender, for about 20–25 minutes. Set aside. When cool enough to handle, remove skin or retain, according to preference.
Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat and dry fry the ground coconut until golden brown. Transfer to a plate and set aside.
Add cooking oil to skillet and fry all the spice-mix items over medium heat until fragrant.
Stir in coconut milk, ground coconut, pandan leaf (if using), chicken, salt, and sugar (if using).
Simmer for 15–20 minutes.
Serve at once.

Rice with Coconut Milk (Nasi Lemak)

A very popular breakfast or lunch dish, not only in Brunei but also throughout neighboring countries like Malaysia, *nasi lemak* is traditionally served with spicy anchovies (see the next recipe), or shrimp or chicken curry, accompanied by sliced cucumbers and hard-boiled or scrambled eggs.

2 cups rice
¼ tsp salt
3 cups coconut milk
2 screwpine leaves, tied into a knot (optional)
1 1-inch piece ginger, crushed

Rinse rice, soak in water for 1 hour. Drain.
In a heavy covered saucepan, place rice, salt, coconut milk, screwpine leaves, and ginger root.
Let come to a boil, cover, then reduce heat to just simmer for about 15–20 minutes.
Fluff up with a fork.
(Alternatively, place all the ingredients in an automatic [electric] rice cooker and follow manufacturer's instructions for cooking, as for plain rice.)

Spicy Anchovies (Sambal Ikan Bilis)

There are many variants of this spicy condiment, the main ingredient of which is dried anchovies. This *sambal* is the traditional accompaniment to coconut rice (*nasi lemak*), along with sliced cucumbers, fried salted peanuts, and half a hard-boiled egg (occasionally an omelet). The combination is a favorite for breakfast or lunch. Dried anchovies can be bought at oriental food stores.

4–5 shallots, chopped
4 cloves garlic, sliced
4 dried chilies, rehydrated and seeded (optional)
3 candlenuts or 15 cashew nuts
2 TBS oil
1 cup dried anchovies (*ikan bilis*)
1 large onion, sliced fine
1 stalk lemon grass, pounded with rolling pin
juice of 1 lime
¼ cup water
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar (optional)

Puree shallots, garlic, chilies (if using), and nuts until smooth in a food processor or blender. Set aside.
Heat oil in a skillet over low heat. Fry anchovies till crisp, for about 1 minute (be careful as they burn easily). Set aside.
Add a tablespoon more oil if needed; sauté pureed spices until fragrant.
Stir in onion, lemon grass, lime juice, water, salt, and sugar (if using).
Cook for about 5–8 minutes until gravy thickens.
Stir in anchovies and cook until warmed through.

Coconut Cassava Cake (Getuk Lindri)

Coconut-based sweets are popular desserts and snacks, served with tea or coffee. Cassava is available at major U.S. supermarkets, especially those that stock Hispanic food items. Usually labeled yucca or yuca, cassava is sold fresh and sometimes frozen. Sweet potatoes can be used if cassava is unavailable, though reduce the amount of sugar to two-thirds cup (the taste and texture will not be the same, however).

Bright red and green food colors are traditional for this sweet. Colors can be omitted or else toned down.

1 cup sugar
¼ cup water
¼ tsp vanilla extract
1 pound cassava root, peeled, rough fibers removed, and cubed
½ cup grated coconut, frozen or fresh preferred (if only dry grated coconut is available, refresh by mixing thoroughly with ¼ cup warm milk before using)
½ tsp salt
red and green food coloring (optional though traditional; omit if using sweet potatoes)
ring mold (about 5 cups capacity, or 8½ × 2½ inches)

Place sugar, water, salt, and vanilla in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to a boil.
When sugar is dissolved, turn off heat. Set aside to cool.
Steam cassava until soft. Mash while still hot.
If using food colors, divide mashed cassava into three equal portions, and place into 3 separate bowls. Likewise divide syrup into three equal portions.
Add 2–3 drops red food color to one portion of syrup, or until desired intensity of color is reached. Repeat for green.
Pour one of the colored syrups over each of the cassava portions and blend each well. Do the same for the uncolored syrup.
Spread each portion carefully and evenly into the mold, starting with green at the bottom, uncolored in the middle, and red on top.
Try to make the layers straight and ensure the colors do not mix for an attractive finish.
Chill for 1 hour.
Unmold onto a serving plate and sprinkle with grated coconut.

BULGARIA

Bulgaria is a southeastern European country on the shores of the Black Sea, slightly larger than Tennessee. The country is partly mountainous, with wide and well-watered valleys, and a moderate continental climate suited to Mediterranean-type crops.

The population constitutes largely Bulgarians, with some Turkish, Romanian, and Hungarian minorities. There is a heritage of Balkan and Turkish cuisine, emphasizing lamb, breads, and cooked vegetables.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: noodles, potatoes, rice, corn bread.
- Meats: mutton, pork, and beef; chicken and duck; sweetbreads, brains, and other innards meat are considered a delicacy.
- Vegetables: cabbage, onions, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, and most other European vegetables.
- Fruits: cherries, grapes (for table and for wine), peaches, apricots, and plums.
- Dairy: milk, butter, cheeses (both hard and soft), and yogurts and cream (sweet and sour).
- Fish: some marine fish; fresh water fish such as carp.

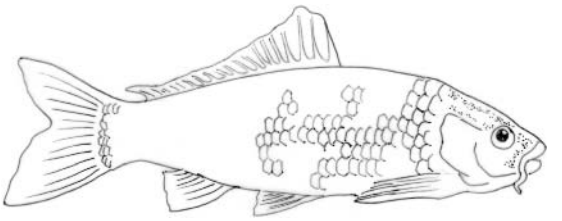
Typical Dishes

- *Shopska salata*: tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onion, and covered with grated white cheese.
- *Sarmi*: cabbage leaf–wrapped rice parcels. Other stuffed vegetables such as peppers, tomatoes, and onions stuffed with mixtures of vegetables, rice, and beans.
- *Tarator*: cold cucumber and garlic soup.
- *Musaka*: layered potatoes and minced meat baked with a layer of yogurt and eggs.
- *Kebabtse*: skewered, spiced minced meat.
- *Guvets*: a meatless stew of vegetables such as potatoes, beans, peppers, tomatoes, onion, garlic, okra.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day with snacks of coffee and pastry.
- Standard European table settings.

- Breakfast: pancakes, sandwiches, *banitsa* (layered puff pastry with cheese, butter and yogurt, which is baked in the oven for 30–40 minutes).
- Midday meal: salad (almost universal); a soup or a *tarator* in summer as an appetizer. The main dish might be meat and potatoes or vegetables. Desserts might include pancakes with honey and nuts, or a chocolate cake.
- The evening meal tends to be similar to midday meal with fewer dishes.
- The structure of a celebratory meal is different, and depends on the occasion. If it is a birthday party there is always a cake, if it is a funeral there is always boiled wheat, and for christening, a fresh loaf.
- On Christmas there must be an odd number of meatless dishes, including nuts, apples, garlic, dried fruit, etc. Dried peppers filled with beans, and *sarmi* are eaten on Christmas night.
- For the New Year, roast pig or turkey is the usual dish.
- Easter cakes together with colored eggs and roasted lamb are the main Easter dishes. For St. George's day (patron saint of Bulgaria), which is a major holiday in Bulgaria, households generally serve roast lamb with rice, baked slowly in an oven.
- Snacks, eaten at mid-morning and in the afternoon, may include a sandwich, a bun, or a piece of pizza.
- Coffee is the most common drink, usually drunk with sweet pastries or a spoonful of rose petal jam and a glass of water. Food is often accompanied by *rakia*, an alcoholic brandy-like drink.



EUROPEAN CARP

Bean Puree **(Papula)**

Beans are an important component of the diet. Serve with hot corn bread and fried fish, and pickled peppers or green tomatoes, or sauerkraut.

Put beans in a blender or food processor to chop coarsely.

½ pound canned or cooked white beans, well drained
4 TBS vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt, pepper, and hot paprika to taste
¼ cup parsley, finely chopped

Heat oil over low heat. Add garlic and paprika. Stir-fry briefly.
Stir into pureed beans. Add salt and pepper, and mix well.
Form a cone of beans on a serving dish.
Sprinkle with paprika and parsley.

Okra Salad **(Bamia Saladi)**

Okra, originally from Africa, have become incorporated in the cuisine via the Ottoman Empire.

1 pound tender young okra
water and 1 tsp salt for cooking okra
juice of 1 lemon
¼ cup oil
salt, pepper to taste
1 TBS parsley, minced
2 firm tomatoes, sliced horizontally

Trim only a sliver off the stem end of the okra (otherwise the okra will release its gelatinous juices).
Place okra into boiling salted water; cook briefly for about 3 minutes.
Drain and cool. Arrange in serving dish.
Mix lemon juice, oil, salt, and pepper.
Pour dressing over okra; sprinkle with parsley.
Garnish with tomatoes.

Mixed Stew (Papazyaniya)

A warming dish for a cold winter's night.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 pound meat with fat (beef, lamb, or pork), cubed
1 onion, chopped
½ cup carrots, peeled and cubed
¼ cup celery root (celeriac) or celery, peeled and cubed
1 tsp paprika
1 bay leaf
10 ounces fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup hot water
¾ pound pearl onions, peeled
5 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 ounce flour
½ cup parsley, minced

Heat oil in a thick saucepan; brown meat quickly on all sides.
Add onion, carrots, and celery. Cover, and sweat vegetables.
Stir in paprika, bay leaf, tomatoes, salt, and pepper.
Add hot water, cover, and simmer until meat is half cooked, about 30 minutes.
Add pearl onions and garlic.
Mix flour with 1 tablespoon cold water to make paste. Stir into stew.
Add more warm water if needed, cover pot tightly.
Simmer until all is tender.
To serve, sprinkle with parsley.
Serve with potatoes or corn bread.

Sweet Vermicelli Noodles (Kadaif)

This is a Balkan version of a famous traditional Turkish confection. Serve with coffee as a snack or after dinner.

1 cup melted butter
1 large packet (1 pound) fine vermicelli noodles, soaked in water for about 5 minutes, then drained
10 ounces walnut or almond meats, crushed coarsely
4 ounces seedless raisins

Butter a 9 × 13-inch baking dish.
Place a layer of noodles, drizzle with melted butter, then sprinkle with nuts and raisins.
Repeat with the remaining ingredients, ending with a noodle layer.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 25 minutes.
Remove from oven and pour syrup over noodles.
Bake 15 minutes more.
Leave to stand for one day to allow syrup to be absorbed.
Cut into squares, and arrange on a big plate.
Garnish with lemons from the syrup. Serve.

Syrup

2 cups sugar
4 cups water
1 large lemon, sliced thinly
5 drops vanilla extract

In a pan, put the sugar, water and lemons over low heat.
Gently simmer until sugar is dissolved but do not stir.
Turn off heat; stir in vanilla.

BURKINA FASO

A landlocked country in central Africa, Burkina Faso was a French colony called Upper Volta until 1960. The climate is tropical, and much of the country is rolling plains or savannah, on which subsistence farmers raise sorghum, other grains, and livestock.

It is populated by many ethnic groups, the largest of which are the Mossi. The cooking is simple and based on staple grains eaten with peanut- and chili-based sauces.

Foodstuffs

- Sorghum, millet, and maize are the most common foodstuffs, supplemented by beans, and occasionally meat and fish.
- Peanuts and chilies are used extensively for sauces and flavorings.
- Fresh, dried, or smoked fish from the rivers.

Typical Dishes

- Stiff porridge eaten as a staple by most people for the main meals.
- Sauces and stews.
- Grilled meats on skewers, as well as various fried snacks are popular street foods.

Styles of Eating

- Many people in rural areas eat only two meals a day, in the morning and after work, sometimes consuming some wrapped leftovers or fruits in between. Three meals a day are consumed by those who can afford them (poverty is rife).
- Meals are consumed by the family sitting around a common pot of stew or relishes.
- Hot sauces and fruit chutneys are common accompaniments to meals.
- Breakfast is usually stiff porridge, either sweetened or with a savory sauce.
- Lunch and supper are more substantial, with many families gathering around a pot of staple on a mat on the floor (in traditional areas), or eating European style (in the cities).

Fish Stew with Vegetables (Maan Nezim Nzedo)

The Niger river and its tributaries provide small fresh-water fish. Often dried and smoked, they are eaten fresh near the rivers.

2 TBS palm oil or vegetable oil
1 cup tomato sauce
4 cups (or more) water
1 onion, thinly sliced
cayenne pepper to taste
salt to taste
1 pound firm-fleshed fresh-water fish (catfish, for example) cut into four pieces
½ pound okra, stems removed and pods cut in halves
2 carrots, peeled and cubed
1 small cabbage, sliced fine
½ pound French beans, sliced into 2-inch pieces
1 cup rice

In a saucepan, bring to a boil the oil, tomato sauce, water, onion, pepper, and salt.
Add fish, vegetables, and rice.
Simmer for 20–25 minutes until rice is tender.
Add extra water during cooking if necessary to ensure good gravy.
To serve: mound rice in the middle of a wide serving dish or individual plates. Surround with the fish and vegetables.

Spiced Lamb Meatballs

The Mossi people were famous warriors, and while expanding their empire they came into contact with many other ethnic groups in central and northern Africa. These spiced meatballs may well have been influenced by North African kebabs.

4 TBS peanut oil
1 onion, chopped
½ tsp cinnamon
1 tsp ginger, grated
1 tsp garlic, minced fine
1 tsp chili flakes
l tsp ground coriander
2 pounds cooked meat (lamb preferable), chopped roughly
1 tsp salt
3 eggs, lightly beaten
¼ cup stale bread crumbs

Heat oil and sauté onions until translucent, then add all spices and stir thoroughly.
Mix meat with salt and onion and spice mixture.
Blend briefly with eggs in a food processor just until eggs are incorporated.
Remove from processor.
Form into 1-inch balls and roll in bread crumbs (about 30 balls).
Chill for 1 hour.
Fry a few at a time in deep fat at 375°F until brown. Drain.
Serve with hot pepper sauce (see box “African Hot Sauces”).

AFRICAN HOT SAUCES

In many places in the world, hot sauces are a necessary condiment for all meals. Across most of Africa, the hot sauces are a variation on a sauce introduced by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, called *pili-pili/piripiri*.

WARNING. Always be careful when cooking with hot peppers. Use kitchen gloves when handling them. Wash your hands carefully afterward. NEVER TOUCH YOUR EYES WHILE WORKING WITH CHILIES.

African Hot Sauce

This is an all-purpose hot sauce found throughout central Africa.

1 dozen chili peppers, cored and seeded
1 small green bell pepper, cored and seeded
1 clove garlic
1 medium onion
2 cans tomato paste
4 TBS vinegar
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp salt
1 tsp dried cayenne pepper flakes (optional)

Grind hot peppers, green pepper, garlic, and onion using mortar and pestle (or use food processor).
Combine with all other ingredients in an enamel or steel (not aluminum) pot.
Simmer for 1–2 hours.
Add cayenne pepper if you need a hotter sauce. Put in jars and refrigerate.
Serve with everything.

Pili-Pili/Piripiri Sauce

This is an easy-to-make hot sauce prepared using chilies and garlic. There are numerous varieties of this sauce, both homemade and commercial.

6 chili peppers, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
juice of 1 lemon
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 small bunch parsley, minced fine
2 TBS vegetable oil
a pinch of salt

Mix all ingredients by hand or in a food processor or blender.
Cook in a hot skillet for a few minutes.
Store in a glass jar in the refrigerator.
Serve with everything.

Bean Cakes

Beans are an important element of the diet, particularly for those who cannot afford meat.

1 12-ounce can black-eyed peas (or ¾ pound black-eyed peas soaked overnight, drained, and simmered in salted water for 20–30 minutes), drained
½ onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
1 egg
salt and pepper to taste
flour for dredging
oil for frying

In a blender or food processor, blend the peas, onion, carrots, egg, salt, and pepper until smooth.
Remove mixture and shape into 2-inch long patties.
Dredge each patty in flour.
Heat about ½ inch oil in a heavy frying pan.
Shallow fry patties until brown on both sides. Add oil if necessary.
Drain and serve as a snack or as breakfast.

Lemon Porridge

This is a slight variation on the standard stiff porridge staple of much of Africa. The sour taste was originally achieved by fermenting the millet batter, but lemon or lime flavoring is commonly used today.

2 cups millet flour (or fine white cornmeal)
4 cups cold water
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup water

Gradually whisk flour with cold water, mixing well to avoid lumps.
Add the lemon juice and let the batter stand for 15 minutes.
Bring water to a boil in a 2-quart pot.
Pour in the millet batter gradually, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon until it is smooth.
Reduce heat and cook, stirring, until the porridge is thick, smooth, and stiff as bread dough, around 5 minutes after the porridge starts to boil.
Pour into a greased 2-quart mold or loaf pans and let stand until set, for about 30 minutes. Unmold and serve with stew.

Mango Chutney

Flavored chutneys such as this are used to add flavor to the bland staple.

2 large, green mangoes, peeled and pits removed, diced
⅓ cup vinegar
1¼ cups brown sugar
1 cup seedless raisins
⅓ cup water
1 lemon, sliced
½ orange, sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
⅛ tsp ground cloves
½ inch fresh ginger root, grated (or ½ tsp powdered ginger)
⅛ tsp powdered chili
⅛ tsp black pepper
½ tsp salt
juice of 2 limes
juice of ½ lemon

In a (nonreactive) nonaluminum pot, simmer gently the mangoes, vinegar, sugar, and raisins until tender, about 15 minutes.
Add all the rest of the ingredients except the juices.
Simmer until well blended (from 1 to 1½ hours).
Add juices.
Serve as relish with any meal.
Store remainders in the refrigerator in air-tight jars.

BURUNDI

Burundi is a landlocked mountainous country on the edge of the African Rift Valley, formerly a Belgian colony. The climate is tropical to cool, enabling subsistence farmers to raise staple crops such as sorghum, cassava, maize, and beans. Cattle and goats supply small amounts of meat and milk. There are plenty of fresh-water fish from rivers and from Lake Tanganyika. Burundi is still suffering from the effects of a civil war that has disrupted food supplies and farming.

The country is densely populated, the population split between Tutsi—mainly cattle herders and subsistence farmers—and Hutu, who are mainly subsistence farmers.

Burundian food uses spices (turmeric, cumin, hot chilies) for certain dishes, reflecting an Arabian influence, and there are some Belgian-influenced baked goods (see box "African Traditional Cooking").

Foodstuffs

- Staples: beans, particularly red kidney beans. Most people eat beans at least once a day. Rice is another, more recent staple.
- Common foods are bananas, plantains, sweet potatoes, cassava, peas, and maize.
- Many families can afford meat only a few times a month. Some raise cattle, sheep, and goats. Those who own cattle regard them as a status symbol and are reluctant to kill them for meat.

Typical Dishes

- Meals consist of bean stews or soups, usually eaten with maize or sorghum porridge.
- *Urwarwa* (homemade banana beer) and *impeke* (homemade sorghum beer) are drunk during special celebrations or sometimes as part of a meal.
- Few sweets or desserts with meals.
- Snacks include groundnuts, sugarcane, and fruits.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL COOKING

Pottery has been practiced in Africa for millennia, and it serves as the basis for most cooking. Pots are often made either by specialized castes or by groups of professional potters, or by women as part of their monthly round. Most pots are burned on an open fire at low temperatures, and are thus fairly friable.

The traditional African pot, used almost all over sub-Saharan Africa, is made with three legs at the bottom, so it can be balanced over an open fire. Most cooking is done in such a pot, the dimensions and precise shape of which vary depending on the local tradition and the size of the family. A well-equipped traditional kitchen will have several such pots. They are used for cooking the staple—often a stiff porridge—as well as the stews or sauces that go with the porridge. They are also used for steaming banana leaf–wrapped packets of food, another traditional way of cooking in Africa. Similar pots, now being replaced by plastic containers, as well as calabashes (dried gourds), were used to bring water from wells or streams.

All cooking at home is done by women. In the many polygynous households on the continent, each wife cooks for herself and her children, sending food in turn to the shared husband. The provision of wood and water for cooking may require up to 6 hours of work a day for many households. This is done almost exclusively by women and girls.

The hearth itself is usually in the open air, fueled by wood or brush collected from the surrounding countryside (which leads to problems of deforestation). In some places, instead of a legged pot, three hearthstones are used to support a round-bottomed pot.

An important cooking implement found in many African households is a wooden mortar and pestle. The pestle is a long, heavy pole, which is used to pound maize or other grain into a meal that can be used for making the staple porridge.

THREE-LEGGED POT

Styles of Eating

- Food is generally eaten by families from shared pots, using spoons and plates for the stews or sauces.
- Wealthier urban families tend to eat following European-standard table settings.
- When close friends or family members meet, they often drink *impeke* through straws, from a single large container, as a symbol of unity.

Plantains and Beans

Plantains and bananas constitute much of the Burundian carbohydrate intake. Beans are served at any meal.

2 cups canned red kidney beans (or dried, soaked overnight in water, drained, and boiled in water to cover for about 30–40 minutes, or until tender), drained
2 TBS palm oil
1 small onion, thinly sliced
4 plantains (or green bananas), peeled and chopped
¼ tsp salt
chili pepper to taste
4 cups water

In a saucepan, heat oil and brown the onion.
Add beans, plantains, salt, and chili pepper; stir-fry for 2 minutes.
Add water and simmer until plantains are cooked and there is just a bit of liquid (about a cup) left in the pan.
Serve hot with rice or sorghum porridge.

Fried Beans (Ibiharage)

Beans serve as a major source of protein for many Burundians.

2 cups dried or canned navy beans
2 pints water
2 TBS vegetable oil
2 large onions, sliced
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 tsp salt
1 dried chili pepper

Simmer beans in water for 2 hours, or until tender; drain and reserve (if using canned, skip this step).
Heat oil in a saucepan.
Sauté onions until translucent.
Add garlic and cook until onions are soft.
Stir in beans, salt, and chili pepper, and simmer for 10 minutes, or until heated through.

Bean Soup (Soup d'Haricot)

This is a popular soup for a midday or evening meal.

⅔ cup dried lima beans
⅔ cup dried white beans
⅔ cup dried pinto beans
6 cups water (two sets)
2 TBS vegetable oil
1½ cups onions, chopped finely
⅔ cup green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
3 stalks celery, chopped
¼ cup parsley, chopped
¼ cup vegetable broth
1 TBS fresh basil, chopped
½ tsp cumin powder
salt and crushed chili pepper to taste
½ cup raw peanuts, ground rough (or ¼ cup chunky natural peanut butter)

Combine beans and 6 cups water. Bring to a boil for 2 minutes; cover and remove from heat. Let beans soak for 2 hours or overnight.
Drain. Discard water.
Add another 6 cups water to beans. Return to a boil and simmer for 1 hour, or until tender.
In a separate pan, heat oil, then sauté onions until translucent. Stir in bell pepper, celery, and parsley and sauté for 3 minutes.

(*continued*)

Add sautéed vegetables, broth, basil, cumin, salt, and chili pepper to beans.
Simmer, covered, until very tender (about 1½ hours).
Ten minutes before serving, stir in the ground peanuts and cook for 10 minutes more.
Adjust seasoning and add a bit more water if too thick.
Serve hot as a main course or as a starter.

Chicken-Flavored Wheat (Boko Boko)

This is the Burundian version of a favorite East African food called *harees*, whose origins are in Arabia. It is meant to be sweet, but you may adjust the sweetness to your own preference.

3 cups whole or half-ground wheat (bulghur)
3 chicken breasts
water, as needed
2 onions, minced
2 tsp salt
6 tsp ghee (clarified butter)
3 cleaned chicken gizzards or 6 chicken hearts, diced
1 small onion, sliced finely
3 TBS turmeric powder
3 TBS sugar
tsp

Soak bulghur in water to cover for 3 hours.
In a saucepan, place the bulghur, chicken breasts, minced onion, 1 teaspoon salt, and the soaking water (if any) topped up to total 3 cups of water. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes. Add more water if needed.
Remove the chicken breasts, shred, and return to bulghur with half of the ghee. Simmer until the mixture has thickened to a paste. The consistency should be of a thick, but still pourable, porridge. Add hot water if necessary.
Meanwhile in a separate pot, prepare the spicy, sweet and savory sauce. Simmer 1 teaspoon salt, chicken gizzards, turmeric, 2 cups of water, and 3 tablespoons sugar for 30–40 minutes, or until the gizzards are tender. Reserve.
In a frying pan, heat the remaining ghee and fry the sliced onion until caramelized.
Serve the *boko boko* hot in warmed bowls, topping each serving with caramelized onions and the sauce.

Anise Bread (Pain Anisette)

Flavored breads such as this were introduced by Belgian colonizers in the twentieth century.

2 tsp dry yeast
1½ TBS sugar
⅓ cup warm water
3⅓ cups flour
1½ tsp salt
1 egg
3 TBS vegetable oil + extra for oiling
2 TBS anise seed powder
1 egg yolk, beaten well

Dissolve the yeast and ½ teaspoon sugar in warm water. Leave in a warm place until frothy, about 10 minutes.
Transfer yeast mixture to a large bowl. Stir in 1 cup flour and mix until smooth. Leave for about 30 minutes, or until doubled in volume.
Add the remaining flour and the rest of the ingredients except the egg yolk, and mix thoroughly.
If mixture seems dry, add enough warm water to make a soft dough.
Knead for 10 minutes on a floured surface until smooth and elastic.
Rub the dough with ½ tablespoon oil, cover with a damp towel, and leave to rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.
Punch down the dough. Knead lightly, divide into 6, and shape into balls.
Set balls well apart on an oiled baking sheet, cover with a damp towel, and leave to rise, about 30 minutes.
Preheat oven to 350°F.
Brush the tops with egg yolk beaten with 1 teaspoon water; bake for 15–20 minutes until golden, and sound hollow when tapped.
Serve hot or at room temperature as a snack.

CAMBODIA

Before becoming part of French colonial Indochina in 1887, Cambodia was part of the powerful Angkor Empire that extended over present-day Vietnam and Thailand. In 1953, Cambodia became an independent monarchy. From 1975 until 1998, the country suffered terrible hardship from the Communist Khmer Rouge, a Vietnamese invasion, and a civil war. The Khmer Rouge were ousted in 1999 and the constitutional monarchy restored. With its tropical plains and mountains, Cambodia grows rice, maize, vegetables, and sugarcane, its most important commercial crop being rubber.

Cambodians are mostly Khmer with a minority comprising Vietnamese, Chinese, and indigenous ethnic groups. Cambodian cooking is influenced by Indian and Chinese cuisines. Although there are similarities to Vietnamese and Thai cooking in the use of aromatic herbs and sweet-sour spicy flavors, hot chilies are used with a lighter touch.

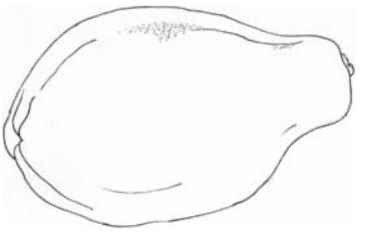
Foodstuffs

- Staple is rice.
- Fish/shellfish preferred.
- Bread is widely eaten: baguette (*banh mi*, from French colonial influence); *naan* (from Indian influence); fried bread sticks (*chaquay*, from Chinese influence).
- Pork, chicken, beef, organ meats.
- Green leafy vegetables, long beans, squash, banana flowers, and unripe fruits used as vegetables (papaya, mango, jackfruit, pineapple).
- Banana, mango, papaya, various exotic tropical fruits such as dragon fruit (a cactus), durian, lychee, rambutan (lychee relative), mangosteen.
- Seasonings: lemon grass; lime; tamarind; fish sauce (*tuk trey*); salted fish paste (*prahoc*); fermented fish paste (*pha-ak*); coconut milk. Pounded spices and herbs called *kroeung* are specified for each dish.

Typical Dishes

- Savory and sweet rice dishes: *kralan*—glutinous (sticky) rice cooked in hollow bamboo with coconut milk; stuffed rice cakes with beans and meat (*ansam chrouk*).

- Sour soups of fish or meat and vegetables flavored with lemon grass, lime rind, or tamarind.
- Chinese-influenced stir-fried meat, poultry or fish with vegetables.
- Grilled meat, poultry or fish dishes.
- Fried spiced fish, meat, or chicken.
- Fish, in popular dishes such as *dt'ray chorm hoy* (steamed fish), *dt'ray aing* (grilled fish), and *sumlar mjew groueng dt'ray* (Cambodian fish soup with herbs).
- Sweets: rice- and coconut milk-based puddings and cakes.
- Drinks: international and local fizzy bottled soft drinks, fresh sugarcane juice, milkshakes with local fruit (*dteuk krolok*), hot or iced coffee, Chinese-style tea commonly drunk with meals. Beer is locally brewed.



UNRIPE PAPAYA

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Rice eaten at every meal; soup, fish eaten twice or more daily.
- Breakfast: rice porridge (*bor-bo*) accompanied by fried bread stick pieces (*cha-quay*) or rice noodles in soup. Chinese tea or coffee with sweetened condensed milk.
- Lunch: boiled rice with soup of vegetables and small quantity of fish, shellfish, or meat.
- Dinner: the main meal. Boiled rice with soup of vegetables and bits of meat or fish. One or two more side dishes of grilled or fried fish, pork or chicken with or without vegetables. All dishes are brought to the table at the same time.
- Snacks from street stalls or markets: baguettes filled with sardines or shredded pork and salad or pickled carrots/radishes; fried noodles; various meat and vegetable soups; rice with banana or pork cooked in a bamboo tube; sweet rice and coconut confections.

Pumpkin and Pork Meatball Soup
(Samlor La Pov Sach Chrouk)

Soups are eaten as starters, or, with the addition of noodles, as the main dish for lunch or evening meals.

Meatballs

½ pound ground pork
1 TBS fish sauce
¼ tsp salt
½ TBS sugar
¼ tsp black pepper
1 stalk green onion, minced

Soup

4 cups water
2 cups pumpkin or squash cubes
2 TBS fish sauce
½ TBS sugar
2 stalks spring onions, chopped
dash of black pepper

(*continued*)

Prepare meatballs: in a bowl, mix ground pork with fish sauce, salt, sugar, black pepper, and green onion.
Roll with moistened hands into tiny balls. Set aside.
Prepare soup: bring water to a boil in a saucepan. Drop pork meatballs into boiling water.
When meatballs are done, add pumpkin.
Simmer until done, for about 15–20 minutes.
Season with fish sauce and sugar.
Sprinkle with spring onion and black pepper.
Serve hot with rice.

Grilled Sesame Chicken (Sach Moan Ang La Ngor)

Chicken is the second most popular protein, after fish. This dish is served as an accompaniment to rice and soup at the evening meal.

2–3 cloves garlic, minced
3 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS oyster sauce (optional)
1 TBS sesame oil
½ TBS light brown sugar
¼ tsp black pepper
4 pieces chicken breasts
2 TBS sesame seeds

In a covered container, blend garlic, soy sauce, oyster sauce, sesame oil, sugar, and black pepper.
Marinate chicken for 4 hours or overnight, refrigerated. Turn over chicken occasionally.
Grill at medium heat.
While chicken grills, dry fry sesame seeds in heavy skillet over low heat, for about 5–7 minutes. Sesame seeds are done when they start jumping and are aromatic.
Sprinkle chicken with roasted sesame seeds.
Serve hot.

Coconut Fish Curry Parcels (Amok Trei)

This steamed fish dish is truly representative of the Cambodian way of blending aromatic herbs and spices and is often recommended as the one dish to try. As each *amok trei* is unwrapped at the table, all the spicy, sweet, and aromatic scents are released. This goes well with hot rice and soup for an evening meal.

1 clove garlic, minced
1 red onion, chopped
2-inch piece fresh galangal root, grated (available from Asian grocers), or ginger
1 lemon grass stalk (just the white part), chopped
¼ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp cayenne powder (or to taste) or paprika

2 TBS fish sauce
1 TBS sugar
14-ounce can coconut milk
8 large cabbage leaves (savoy or other strong-leafed variety)
1 pound white fish fillets, cut into 1-inch cubes
salt to taste
8 sheets foil, 10 × 10 inches

In a blender or food processor, puree the garlic, onion, galangal, lemon grass, turmeric, cayenne, fish sauce, sugar, and coconut milk.
In a covered saucepan, heat the coconut-spice mixture and simmer for about 10 minutes until thick, stirring occasionally.
Cut out the thick central rib of the cabbage leaves; and let the leaves soak in a bowl of boiling water to wilt.
In a bowl, place the fish and salt them lightly; mix in thoroughly half of the hot coconut-spice sauce.
Divide the fish mixture into eight portions.
Place fish mixture in the center of each leaf and fold the edges over to form parcels. To ensure better coverage, wrap again in foil, sealing tightly.
Steam parcels for 1 hour in a perforated double boiler. Alternatively, in a large, deep covered saucepan, place a colander or rack over (not in) boiling water. Place the parcels on colander to steam.
About 10 minutes before parcels are done, gently reheat the remaining sauce.
Place a central bowl of sauce for each diner to pour over each parcel as it is opened.

Vegetarian Pancakes (Num Ta Leng Sap)

These pancakes are eaten at any time and are a great favorite at home and as street snacks.

Batter

1 cup rice flour
2 TBS cornstarch
1½ cups water
1 cup coconut milk
1 tsp sugar
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp turmeric powder
2 spring onions, finely minced
1 TBS vegetable oil

In a blender, blend rice flour, cornstarch, water, coconut milk, sugar, salt, and turmeric until smooth. Add spring onions. Set aside.
Heat a nonstick 8- to 10-inch frying pan over medium heat.
When the frying pan is hot, grease it with a folded paper towel dipped in oil (do not use a plastic-bristled pastry brush).
Pour a 5-inch circle of batter in frying pan, tilting pan from side to side to spread the batter.
When bubbles appear on the pancake, spoon out a portion of the filling in the center.

(*continued*)

Cover pan for a few seconds until the pancake is golden brown underneath.
Fold over the pancake to make a half-moon shape.
Remove and place on a plate. Keep warm in the oven while the rest is being cooked.
Repeat for remainder of batter. There should be enough for 8–10 cakes, depending on size of the pan.

Filling

½ cup green mung beans
2 cups water
1 block firm tofu, mashed
1 cup jicama, peeled and diced (or substitute water chestnuts)
2 TBS mushroom or soy sauce
1 TBS vegetable oil
2 cups bean sprouts

Boil mung beans in water until tender, for about 25–30 minutes. Drain and set aside.
Mix well tofu with cooked mung beans, jicama, and mushroom sauce.
In a skillet or wok, heat oil over medium heat.
Sauté tofu mixture for a couple of minutes; add bean sprouts.
Stir-fry for about 3 minutes. Do not overcook bean sprouts; they should still be crunchy. Set aside.

To Serve

large Romaine lettuce leaves, rinsed, drained, and wiped dry
1 medium cucumber, sliced into julienne strips
1 large bunch fresh mint leaves or royal (Thai) basil, rinsed and drained
3 TBS fish sauce for dipping (or sweet dipping sauce; see the recipe following)

Take a lettuce leaf in your hand; place a pancake, cucumber strips, and a sprig of mint/basil and roll.
Dip roll into sauce.
Bite into roll, taking care not to drip down your sleeve.

Sweet Dipping Sauce (Tirk Sa-Ieu Chu P'em)

This is a favorite for dipping pancake wraps.

¼ cup hot water
1 TBS dark soy sauce
1 TBS fresh lime juice
1½ to 2 TBS sugar (to taste)
½ tsp chili paste or sauce (optional)
¼ cup roasted unsalted peanuts, crushed

Mix well the hot water, soy sauce, lime juice, sugar, and chili paste.
Top with peanuts before serving.

Jackfruit Muffins (Num Tnor)

This sweet uses ripe jackfruit, an aromatic fruit beloved throughout Cambodia and all of Southeast Asia. Serve as dessert or as a snack with tea or coffee.

2 eggs
½ cup light brown sugar
½ cup coconut milk
1 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp vanilla
½ cup chopped fresh, canned, or frozen ripe jackfruit (Note: canned jackfruit is usually sweetened; if using, halve the amount of sugar.)

Preheat the oven to 325°F.
Grease muffin pan with cooking oil or spray.
In a blender or food processor, mix all ingredients, except fruit, until smooth.
Stir in the fruit.
Pour batter into the muffin pan, filling the cups about two-thirds full.
Bake for 15 or 20 minutes, or until muffins test done.
Let muffins cool in the pan for 10 minutes before taking them out.

CAMEROON

Cameroon, a western African country with a coast on the Bight of Biafra, between Nigeria and the Republic of Congo, was formed in 1961, unusually, by the union of French and British colonies of the same name. With a varied topography from plains to mountains, and a tropical climate along the coastline, coffee and cocoa are grown for export, as well as a range of subsistence staples.

The population is composed of various ethnic groups. The cuisine combines indigenous elements with some French and British influence.

Foodstuffs

- In addition to the staples—sorghum and maize—people eat many forest products including game and vegetables.
- Virtually all animals caught are eaten, including field mice (considered a delicacy), snakes, and monkeys.
- Vegetables include greens, yams, cassava leaves, peanuts, eggplants.

Typical Dishes

- Stews with chicken or meat.
- Steamed or roasted food in leaf packets are common.

CASSAVA LEAVES

Styles of Eating

- When possible, people eat three meals a day, and often buy or make small snacks in between, with fried foods and peanuts predominating.
- Breakfasts may be leftovers from the night before, or a light porridge.
- Lunch for urban people is more substantial.
- Evening meals are usually eaten by families together, sitting on a mat on the floor and sharing pots of the staple and side dishes:

stews and roasted meats. Men may eat alone, or with one (rarely more) of their wives if they have several.
- Some meals, particularly in cafes, roadside stands, and restaurants, are eaten with European settings.

Chicken for the Boss
(Poulet Directeur Général)

More popularly called *poulet DG*, pronounced "day-zje," this is considered a lavish dish fit for a boss. Serve with *miondo* (as the cassava staple or *bâton de manioc* is called in Cameroon; see Angola for the box "African Staple") or rice, and fried plantains.

¼ cup palm oil (or any vegetable oil)
salt and black pepper to taste
1 bouillon cube, crushed to powder
1-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
1 TBS parsley
1 garlic clove, minced
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
a handful of French green beans, ends trimmed, left whole
2–3 bell peppers (any color), cored, seeded, and chopped
1 chicken, cut into serving-sized pieces
1 onion, chopped

Mix half of the oil with seasoning, bouillon cube, ginger, parsley, garlic, carrots, beans, and peppers in a bowl.
Add pieces of chicken, stir well, and marinate for 3 hours.
Heat remaining oil in a large, heavy skillet or Dutch oven.
Add onions and fry until translucent.
Add chicken and fry over high heat until lightly browned.
Add remaining ingredients.
Reduce heat. Do not cover.
Simmer, stirring regularly, until chicken is done and liquid partly evaporated, leaving some sauce. Add some warm water by the tablespoon if the pot becomes dry before the chicken is done.

Manioc Leaf Puree (Kpwem)

Serve as a side dish with a meat stew and staple.

2–3 pounds of cassava (manioc) leaves, stems removed, rinsed and drained, torn into pieces (substitute kale or spinach)
6 cups water
2 onions, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp fresh ginger root, grated

(*continued*)

salt to taste
3 cups canned palm soup base or canned palm nut pulp (available from African stores)
1 hot chili pepper, seeded and chopped
3 TBS natural peanut butter

Crush the cassava leaves (or other greens) with a mortar and pestle, or process roughly in food processor.
Bring water to a simmer in a large cooking pot.
Add the onions, garlic, ginger, and salt.
Simmer for a few minutes.
Stir in the crushed greens, palm soup base, and chili pepper. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
In a separate bowl, blend peanut butter and some of the stock to a thin paste. Add to the simmering stock. Stir.
Simmer for another 10 minutes, or until the greens are tender.
Serve hot with *miondo* (*bâton de manioc*) or rice.

Fried Fish in Peanut Sauce

Fish are a highly prized food. Sea fish are traded inland in dried and smoked form, and river fish are caught wherever possible.

vegetable oil for frying
1 whole fish (any firm, white-fleshed, about 2 pounds), washed, patted dry, and cut into serving-size pieces (reserve the head)
2–3 garlic cloves, minced
½ cup smoked or dried shrimp or prawns (available from African and Asian stores)
1 tsp cilantro, minced
½ tsp grated fresh ginger
½ tsp grated nutmeg
salt and black pepper to taste
2 TBS palm or other oil
1 onion, finely sliced
2 chili peppers, whole
1 cup natural peanut butter

Heat oil in a skillet.
Rub the fish with half the garlic and let rest for 10 minutes. Fry the fish on both sides until done. Drain on paper towels and reserve.
Drain off the frying oil from the skillet and wipe it clean with paper towels.
Heat the skillet over low heat with 2 tablespoons palm oil. Fry the onion until golden. Stir in the rest of the garlic and chili peppers, and fry until light golden (be careful, as garlic burns quickly).
Add the fried fish, and set aside until needed.
Prepare the shrimp stock: grind half the dried shrimp together with the cilantro, ginger, nutmeg, salt, and pepper in a blender or food processor (or mortar and pestle).
In a saucepan place 3 cups of water, and stir in the dried shrimp mixture and fish head. Allow to simmer for 30 minutes. Discard fish head.

At this point, you may strain the stock, or choose to retain the flavorful solids to add body to the sauce.
Prepare the peanut sauce: add 3–4 tablespoons hot stock to peanut butter; mix well to a smooth slurry. Add slurry to the rest of the stock in the pan, and stir until smooth.
Simmer until thickened. Add a little more peanut butter if not thick enough.
Stir in the reserved fish and onions and remaining dried shrimp to the simmering peanut sauce.
Simmer until heated through, about 10 minutes. Stir and check occasionally to see that the sauce is not burning. If the sauce has thickened too much, add a bit more water. Serve fish and sauce over rice or *miondo*.
The cooked chili peppers can be served together with the fish as a garnish, or discarded as desired.

Bean Cake (Haricot Koki)

Steaming or baking food in banana leaves is a traditional way of cooking.

2 cups dried cowpeas (black-eyed peas), kidney beans, or white beans
¼ cup (or more) water
¼ cup palm oil
1 bell pepper (any color), cored, seeded, and chopped
1 small chili pepper, cored, seeded, and finely chopped (optional)
salt to taste
aluminum foil (or banana leaves, passed quickly over a low flame to make them supple), cut into 10 × 10 inch sheets
string for wrapping

Wash and pick through the cowpeas.
Place them in a large pot, cover with boiling water, and soak overnight.
After soaking, rub to remove the skins, then rinse and drain.
Grind the cowpeas into a thick paste in a food processor, adding water a bit at a time to form a smooth paste.
Warm the oil in a skillet. Fry the sweet and chili peppers until soft. Add with the oil to the bean paste.
Add salt to taste and mix well.
Lay 4 tablespoons of the bean mixture in the middle of the foil sheet. Fold over both sides to seal to completely enclose the beans. Tie with kitchen string.
Stack packets in the top compartment of a steamer.
Steam packets over (not in) boiling water for about 1 hour, or until done (remove one to test).
Eat hot with rice or *miondo*, or cold as a snack.

Fish Stew with Rice

Fish are prized and prepared fresh or salted, dried, and smoked for preservation. This stew is often made for lunch or dinner.

1 small onion, sliced
5 TBS oil
3 TBS tomato paste
2½ pounds fish fillet, cut in large pieces
3 cups water
2 level tsp salt
2 carrots, peeled and sliced
½ pound cabbage, shredded
2 small sweet potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
¼ pound okra, stem ends removed
1 pound cooked (hot) rice

Fry onion in hot oil in a saucepan until translucent (do not brown).
Add tomato paste and fish.
Cover and cook over low heat for ½ hour.
Add water, salt, and vegetables to fish mixture. Cook gently for 1 hour.
Serve stew ladled over rice.

CANADA

The second largest country in the world (after Russia), Canada is slightly larger than the United States. Originally peopled by Native Americans and Inuit, Canada was colonized by the French and the British and became self-governing in 1867. It remains in the British Commonwealth. The climate ranges from subarctic and arctic in the north to temperate in the south. On the southeastern and western plains (prairies), wheat, barley, fruits, and vegetables are grown extensively for local use and export. Cattle are raised for meat and dairy products. Along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, fish and seafood are plentiful.

Canadians are predominantly of British, French, and other European descent, with a minority of Native Americans and settlers from Asia, Africa, and other countries.

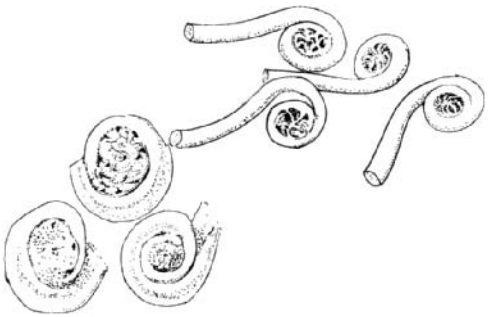
Canadian cuisine is primarily influenced by British and French methods of cooking and uses available native ingredients. Like the United States, Canada has assimilated elements from the cuisines of immigrants (Italian, German, other European, Chinese, Indian) and imports foods from all over the world.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potato, bread, noodles.
- Meats: beef, pork, chicken, turkey, lobster, scallops, seal blubber, Arctic char (a fish), buffalo (bison), caribou, elk, salmon.
- Vegetables: potatoes, turnips (rutabaga), cabbage, carrots, beans, fiddlehead fern greens, wild rice, maize.
- Fruits: apples, pears, peaches, berries (cranberry, saskatoon berry, bakeapple/cloudberry, blueberries).
- Seasonings/flavorings: pepper, sage, thyme, onion; maple syrup.

Typical Dishes

- Hearty soups and stews of meat and vegetables: pea soup, beef stew, rabbit and other game stew.
- Roast, grilled meats (beef, venison, bison) and poultry (duck, goose, turkey, chicken).



FIDDLEHEADS

- *Tourtière* (meat pie) and *tarte au sucre* (sugar pie) in Quebec; cod tongues and seal flipper pie in Newfoundland. Sweet pies (apple and other fruit, pumpkin).
- The biggest family meals are on Thanksgiving (celebrated in October in Canada) and Christmas. Turkey is usually served with cranberries and stuffing. At Thanksgiving the traditional dessert is pumpkin pie; at Christmas many people serve Christmas cake.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Daily family meals around a table are becoming rare.
- Breakfast: pancakes, eggs, bacon, hot cereal; cold cereal, toast or muffin with coffee or tea.
- Lunch: a light meal of soup, sandwich or salad, pizza or pasta.
- Dinner: also called supper. The largest meal, eaten early in the evening.
- At least one daily meal of meat, potatoes, and vegetable(s).
- Ready-prepared meals (fresh or frozen) are bought from supermarkets and warmed in the oven or microwave.
- Fast food (pizza, hamburger, fried chicken), take-home and delivered foods, and international cuisines available.

Pork Buns

This savory bread is a classic from Newfoundland, together with damper dog, bangbelly, figgy duff, and other interestingly named, quickly made breads that use salt pork or dried fruits. The original recipe used salt pork instead of bacon. This would be eaten as an accompaniment to afternoon tea.

6 strips fatty bacon, sliced into ½-inch pieces
2 cups flour
3 tsp baking powder
⅔ cup lukewarm water
flour for rolling out

Preheat oven to 375°F.
Grease a cookie sheet with butter or margarine.
In a dry skillet at low heat, cook the bacon until brown and crisp. Set aside to cool slightly.
In a mixing bowl, blend the flour and baking powder.
Make a hollow in the middle of the flour mixture; pour in the bacon together with the fat, scraping all the bits from the skillet.
Add lukewarm water and mix into a dough.
Place the dough onto a lightly floured surface.
Roll out the dough to about ½-inch thick.
Cut the dough with a floured round cookie cutter.

Place cut buns on the greased cookie sheet, about 2 inches apart.
Bake for 30–35 minutes or until the buns test done.

Inuit Fry Bread (Assaleeak)

The Inuit (Eskimo) live in the far north and traditionally ate seal, caribou, wild salmon, and wild berries. Most food, such as cod, were eaten raw or preserved. Modern transportation has changed the traditional diet. This dish is the Inuit version of doughnuts, eaten as a snack.

1½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ tsp baking powder
a pinch of salt
¾–1 cup water
oil for frying
¼ cup sugar mixed with 2 TBS cinnamon
melted butter for dipping (optional)

In a bowl, blend flour, baking powder, and salt.
Stir in water, mixing well to get a thick batter.
In a heavy skillet, heat an inch or more of oil to 350°F.
Spoon batter into the oil, a few at a time, so as not to crowd the pan.
Fry until brown all over.
Drain on paper towels.
Dust heavily with the cinnamon sugar.
Alternatively, dip the fried puffs in melted butter, then sprinkle with sugar.
Serve immediately.

Grandfathers (Grandpères)

This very old recipe was handed down from one French-Canadian generation to the next. It is usually eaten for dessert or breakfast.

2 cups cake flour
1 TBS baking powder
½ tsp salt
3 TBS butter
¾ cup milk
2 cups maple syrup
2 cups water

In a bowl, blend flour, baking powder, and salt.
Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles oatmeal.
Stir in milk, mixing well.
In a covered saucepan, combine maple syrup with water and bring to a boil.
Drop dough by tablespoonfuls into the hot maple syrup.

(*continued*)

Cover and let simmer for 25 minutes.
Serve very hot, pouring over them the syrup in which they were cooked.

Potatoes and Cheese with Gravy (Poutine)

This homely snack, originally from Quebec, puts together comforting fried potatoes, meaty gravy, and melting cheese. The potatoes are fried from scratch in lard for authenticity. Several variations of this dish include an Italian variation, which uses spaghetti sauce. A similar dish called disco fries, which consists of French fries topped with gravy and cheese, is also eaten in the northeastern United States.

2½ cups squeaky cheese (very fresh cheese, or substitute white cheddar cheese or Monterey Jack), diced
2 cups lard or oil
5 boiling potatoes, peeled, cut into thick, chunky sticks, rinsed and patted dry
2 cups prepared very thick beef or chicken gravy, kept hot
4 bowls

Into each bowl, place ⅓ cup cheese. Set aside.
In a deep skillet, heat the lard or oil at medium heat.
Fry the potatoes until brown.
Distribute the hot potatoes over the cheese in the bowls.
Top with the remaining cheese.
Pour hot gravy over the cheese.
Serve at once.

Tuna à la King

This is a very simple and quick-cooking sauce that can be served over noodles, baked potatoes, or rice for lunch or light supper.

2 TBS butter
2 TBS flour
½ tsp dried thyme or marjoram
1 can (13 ounces) evaporated milk
2 cans (6½ ounces each) solid tuna, drained and flaked
1 cup frozen peas or mixed vegetables, thawed and drained
salt and pepper
juice from ½ lemon
2 TBS chopped parsley

In a saucepan, melt butter over medium heat.
Whisk in flour and thyme or marjoram, stirring for 2 minutes.
Whisk in gradually the evaporated milk, stirring until slightly thickened.

Add tuna, peas, and salt and pepper to taste.
Cook for 5–7 minutes or until piping hot.
Stir in lemon juice.
Garnish with parsley.

Meat Pie (Tourtière)

There are many variations of this classic Christmas pie, popular throughout French Canada. Made with pork or just beef, sometimes with wild game, or flavored with allspice instead of cloves and cinnamon, with or without onions, each family makes its own slightly different. Eaten with a salad, it makes a light meal for lunch or supper.

1¼ pounds ground pork
¾ pound lean ground beef
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground cloves
1 onion, finely chopped
½ cup water
1 tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper
prepared pastry for a 9-inch double-crust pie

In a small, covered saucepan, place all the ingredients except the pastry.
Cook at low heat for about 1 hour, or until meat is tender.
Set aside to cool.
Place the bottom crust on a pie plate.
Stir the meat mixture and spoon evenly onto the crust.
Place top crust over the meat mixture.
Seal the crust edges tightly with a fork.
Slash the top crust in several places to let out steam.
Bake at 400°F until light brown, for about 25–30 minutes.

Pea Soup

Hearty, warming soups are commonly eaten during the long winters. This soup is most likely of British origin and is served with corn bread and butter for lunch or supper.

1 cup dried whole yellow peas, rinsed
4 cups boiling water
¼ pound salt pork (or 4 strips bacon)
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
3 stalks chopped parsley or 1 tsp dried sage
salt, pepper to taste

(*continued*)

Place the peas in a bowl.
Pour boiling water over the peas, and let stand for 1 hour.
Simmer the salt pork in 1 cup water for 5 minutes to reduce its saltiness. Discard the water. (There is no need to boil the bacon.)
In a covered saucepan, put peas and soaking water, onion, carrot, celery, salt pork or bacon, and parsley or sage. Simmer at low heat for 45 minutes or until peas are tender.
Add salt (taste first as the salt pork or bacon are salty) and pepper to taste.
Serve hot.

Nanaimo Bar

Originally from the town of Nanaimo in British Columbia, this three-layer chocolate dessert is very popular throughout Canada and is almost always found at buffets in the western provinces.

Bottom Layer

½ cup butter
¼ cup sugar
5 TBS cocoa
1 egg, beaten
1¼ cups graham cracker crumbs
1 cup coconut
½ cup finely chopped almonds

In a small saucepan over low heat, melt butter, sugar, and cocoa.
Stir in the egg and cook until thick.
Remove from heat. Stir in crumbs, coconut, and nuts.
Press firmly into an ungreased 8 × 8 inch pan.

Second Layer

½ cup butter
2 TBS and 2 tsp cream
2 TBS vanilla custard powder
2 cups confectioners' sugar

Mix butter, cream, custard powder, and confectioners' sugar together well. Beat until light. Spread over bottom layer.

Third Layer

4 squares semisweet chocolate (1 ounce each)
2 TBS unsalted butter

Melt chocolate and butter over low heat. Cool.
While still liquid, pour over the second layer and chill in the refrigerator.
To serve, slice into bars.

CAPE VERDE

Cape Verde is a cluster of islands in the Atlantic, off Guinea-Bissau. The tropical islands are rocky with some areas fertile for cultivation. The islands were uninhabited when discovered by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and served as entrepôts for the slave trade. Independent since 1975, the islands' economy is based on fishing, labor migration, and tourism.

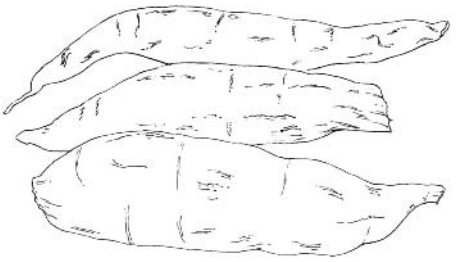
Most Cape Verdeans come from mixed African-Portuguese origins, and the cuisine and culture reflect this fusion.

Foodstuffs

- Enslaved Africans brought knowledge of growing and cooking tropical crops. The Portuguese brought livestock. They used Cape Verde for feeding the crews of their sailing ships and as an experimental station for growing foods from the Americas, such as corn, hot peppers, pumpkins, peanuts, and cassava. They also brought sugar, bananas, mangoes, papayas, and other tropical crops from Asia.
- National food preferences, reflected in ritual foods, include an affection for dried corn, either whole kernels (hominy/samp) or ground to various degrees of fineness.

Typical Dishes

- The national dish, *cachupa*, is a stew of hominy and beans with fish or meat. It means home to Cape Verdeans everywhere.
- *Xerem*, dried corn pounded in a mortar to the fineness of rice, is the staple of feasts. *Kuskus*, ground finer still and steamed in a distinctive ceramic pot called a *binde*, is a special treat served hot with butter and milk (*kuskus ku leite*) or molasses (*kuskus ku mel*).



CASSAVA ROOTS

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are the norm, though people at work are likely to eat a small lunch, reserving the main meal for the evening.
- Tables are set European style, with individual plates or bowls and spoons, and knives and forks where possible.

Fish Soup (Caldo de Peixe)

Unsurprisingly, seafood and fish form a central part of the Cape Verdean diet. This dish has Portuguese origins.

3 pounds fresh, whole, cleaned sea fish (your choice), cut into 2-inch pieces
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 TBS palm or other oil
2 bay leaves (1 crushed to a powder)
salt and pepper to taste
3 medium onions, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
4 scallions (green onions), chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
4 cups water
6 white potatoes, peeled, cubed
3 sweet potatoes, peeled, cubed
1 cup squash, yam, cassava, or green banana, cubed
½ cup fresh parsley, chopped

Rub fish with half the minced garlic, 1 tablespoon oil, powdered bay leaf, salt, and pepper; let rest for about 15 minutes.
Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large pot and gently sauté onions, remaining garlic, tomatoes, scallions, and sweet peppers, for 5 minutes, or until softened.
Add fish, remaining bay leaf, and water.
Cover and bring to a gentle boil.
Add both types of potatoes, squash, and parsley (add water if insufficient to cover).
Reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are tender, about 20–25 minutes. Season to taste.
Serve hot.

Stewed Meat and Vegetables (Carne Gizado)

Meat is generally too expensive for most Verdeans to afford often. When it is available, it is made into a stew to feed a family. Serve this with plain corn grits or hominy.

1 pound cubed meat (pork or beef)
1 bay leaf
1 tsp hot paprika
salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup palm or vegetable oil
2 medium onions, chopped rough

2 white potatoes, peeled and cut in chunks
1 pound manioc root, peeled and cut in chunks
1 medium white yam, peeled and cut in chunks
1 green banana, peeled and cut in chunks
water to cover

Marinate meat overnight with the bay leaf, paprika, salt, and pepper.
In a Dutch oven or heavy saucepan, heat the oil. Add the meat, marinade, and onions and braise on low heat until medium done, about 30 minutes.
Add the vegetables and cover with water.
Simmer at low heat until the vegetables are cooked, about 20–25 minutes.
Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Thick Chicken Rice Soup (Canja)

This thick soup is served on special family events and during New Year. Chickens are kept in the yard, and the meat can be rather tough.

½ chicken, cut into serving-sized pieces
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 clove garlic, sliced
1 bay leaf or 1 tsp dried sage
1 TBS paprika
2 medium onions, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
3 cups short-grain white rice
4 cups chicken stock (or 2 chicken bouillon cubes dissolved in 4 cups hot water)

In a blender or food processor, process the oil, garlic, bay leaf, and paprika to a paste. Rub all over chicken and let stand for 30 minutes or more for the flavors to be absorbed.
Heat oil and sauté onions in a heavy pot until softened.
Stir in tomatoes and sauté for about 5 minutes.
Add chicken pieces and stock. Bring to a boil.
Add rice and stir occasionally.
Simmer for approximately 30–35 minutes, until fairly thick, but never dry (add stock if necessary to ensure that the soup is moist).

Ground Corn with Vegetables and Meat (Supida de Xerem)

Xerem, a kind of grits, is a staple for most meals. This is a one-dish meal.

1 pound dried navy beans (or equivalent canned)
1½ pounds boneless pork, cubed
salt and pepper to taste

(*continued*)

3 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup vinegar
2 bay leaves
2 pounds *xerem* (coarse ground maize)
2 large onions, quartered
3½ cups water
1 butternut squash or pumpkin (about 1½ pounds), unpeeled, in large chunks
10 kale leaves, cut into strips, blanched in boiling water for 5 minutes and drained
½ pound salt pork (or fat bacon), diced
½ cup olive oil

Soak beans overnight in water; drain and simmer with salt pork in water to cover for about 40 minutes until half cooked. Drain. (Omit this step if using canned.)
Marinate pork overnight in a covered container in the refrigerator with salt and pepper, garlic, vinegar, and bay leaves.
Two hours before cooking, mix ground maize with quartered onions and enough water (about a half cup) to moisten the meal.
Boil kale in water until medium done. Drain.
Reserve the onions soaked with the maize until needed; simmer the ground maize in water to cover until half done.
In a large pot (Dutch oven or heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid), spread a layer of squash peel side down at the bottom.
Next spread the pork and marinade with garlic and bay leaves, kale, beans, onions, and finally the ground maize.
Sprinkle between each layer salt and pepper.
Add ½ cup oil and 3 cups water.
Seal the pot firmly with aluminum foil and cover with the lid (or use a pressure cooker following manufacturer's instructions).
Cook very gently and slowly on a low flame for 1½ hours.
Serve hot.

Rich Cachupa (Cachupa Rica)

Cachupa is the unofficial national dish of Cape Verde. In poorer households it is made of whatever items can be found, and meat is rarely one of them. Instead, fish or a small piece of sausage may be substituted. The following recipe is for the *cachupa* of the wealthy. The poorer a family is, the less likely to have meat or a varied selection of vegetables. *Cachupa* is served on Sundays and for feasts and birthdays.

½ pound dried navy beans
water, as needed
4 cups corn grits
2 onions, cubed
2 TBS olive oil
2 bay leaves
salt and hot paprika to taste
½ pound beef in chunks (or equal amounts of chicken thighs, or chunks of large, firm-fleshed fish)
½ pound pork spareribs
½ pound bacon or fat pork, diced

4 sausages (Portuguese dried *chouriço* sausage or Spanish *chorizo*)
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
½ pound Savoy cabbage, cut into large chunks
½ pound green bananas, peeled and cubed (optional)
½ pound sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed (optional)
½ pound manioc (yucca, cassava), peeled and cubed (optional)
½ pound tomatoes, chopped (optional)

Pour boiling water over beans to cover and soak overnight.
Simmer the beans and grits for ½ hour in a large, heavy pot with water to barely cover, and with 1 onion, 1 tablespoon oil, 1 bay leaf, and a pinch of salt until water is absorbed, and beans are half done.
Gently simmer the beef, pork, bacon, and sausages with 1 onion, garlic, 1 tablespoon oil, 1 bay leaf, paprika, and salt for about 1 hour, or until tender.
Add meats and their liquid to grits and beans, and simmer.
Add potatoes and cabbage (and optional vegetables), and simmer until all is tender, about 35–45 minutes.
Remove from heat and let *cachupa* stand for 10 minutes.
Adjust seasoning and serve.

Coconut Candy (Leite Coco)

This is a common snack.

¼ cup sugar (or substitute molasses or dark corn syrup)
¼ cup water
1 pound fresh coconut, grated
1 pound sugar
1 ounce butter to grease cookie sheet
grated rind of 2 lemons

Prepare caramel by melting ¼ cup sugar in a heavy-bottomed pan over very gentle heat. When the sugar starts to melt, move or tilt the pan (but do not stir or sugar will crystallize) so that the sugar melts evenly. Be careful not to burn the sugar (alternatively, use ¼ cup molasses.) When the sugar syrup is a dark amber, or medium brown, it is done.
Carefully add the water (be careful as the caramel will sputter), and simmer until the caramel is dissolved.
Add coconut and sugar, and cook over low heat to soft-ball stage (234–240°F).
Remove from heat.
Add rind and mix thoroughly with a buttered wooden spoon for about 5 minutes, then spread onto a buttered cookie sheet.
Cut out into squares or diamonds.
Allow to harden before serving.

Honey Cake (Bolo de Mel)

Originating from Portugal, this cake is served during afternoon breaks.

3 TBS unsalted butter
1 cup honey
2 eggs, separated
2 cups flour
1 TBS baking powder
1 tsp grated lemon rind
1 cup ground almonds

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Melt butter, add honey and mix well.
Add egg yolks one at a time, mixing well after each.
Combine flour, baking powder, and lemon rind.
Beat egg whites into stiff peaks.
Alternate adding flour and egg whites to the butter mixture, mixing thoroughly but lightly after each addition.
Fold in almonds.
Butter a 2-quart baking pan.
Pour batter into pan and bake for 1 hour or until done.
Cool for 30 minutes before slicing. Serve with coffee at mid-afternoon.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

This landlocked central African country about the size of Texas was formerly a French colony. With a flat rolling plain and tropical climate, cassava and other staples, fruits, vegetables, and livestock are raised.

The cuisine, like that of other central African countries, is based on mashed staples or stiff porridge eaten with vegetables or meat sauces. There are some French dishes.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice; *foutou* (mashed plantain and cassava); and *fufu* (fermented cassava).
- Beef and chicken.
- In Bangui, on the river, a prized food is grilled capitaine fish.
- Yams, maize, beans and other legumes, green vegetables.
- Banana, plantain, oranges, pineapple, sesame seeds.

Typical Dishes

- Stews and sauces accompany the staple in almost all meals. Cooked greens with peanuts are eaten frequently.
- Grilled meats (beef, pork).
- A favorite porridge is *bouiller*, made of rice, peanut butter, and sugar.
- Ginger beer is the beverage of choice for many people.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day are common, though three meals a day are gradually taking over.
- Families eat together around a mat on the floor, sharing the staple and sauces or stews.
- Street snacks, often of peanuts, sweet potatoes, or millet, fried or baked; or grilled or roasted meat are available.

African Spinach (Spinach à l'Afrique)

Spinach (or other greens) are commonly cooked with peanuts (called groundnuts in Africa).

2 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
2 tomatoes, thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 pound spinach (fresh or frozen), chopped
½ cup (or more) water
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
4 ounces natural peanut butter

Heat oil and sauté onions until soft.
Add tomatoes and green pepper, and cook for 1 minute, stirring.
Add spinach, water, and seasoning.
Cover and simmer for 5 minutes.
Take ¼ cup liquid from the spinach mixture and blend with the peanut butter.
Add to pan and mix well; cook for 10 minutes over low heat, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking.
Serve over rice or *fufu*.

Egusi *Sauce*

This sauce, common throughout central Africa, is served over boiled vegetables or rice, or grilled chicken, fish, or meat. *Egusi* (also called *agusi*, *agushi*, or *egushi*) is the flour ground from seeds of certain gourds (relatives of pumpkins and squashes) and can be found in African grocery stores. Pumpkin seeds (*pepitas*), available from Latino grocery stores, can be substituted.

2 TBS palm oil (or any cooking oil)
1 onion, chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped (or ½ cup canned tomatoes)
1 hot chili pepper, cleaned and chopped
salt and red chili pepper to taste
2 cups *egusi*, roasted and ground very fine

Combine all ingredients except *egusi* in a saucepan.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for several minutes.
Stir in *egusi*. Add just enough water to make a thick sauce.
Simmer for several more minutes until heated through.
Serve over boiled rice, yams, plantains; or grilled chicken, fish, or meat.

Green Rice (Riz Vert)

Rice has become a sought-after luxury food in households that can afford it.

2 cups rice
7½ cups water
1 pound fresh spinach, washed, trimmed, and finely chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
2 tomatoes, stemmed and quartered
1 cup cooked chicken (or mutton or other meat), cubed
red chili or cayenne powder to taste
salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients except seasoning in a large, heavy, lidded pot.
Bring to a boil over high heat.
Stir, cover tightly, and reduce heat to lowest.
Cook for about 30 minutes, until rice is tender.
Season with red chili, salt, and pepper to taste. Stir well.
Serve hot.

Banana Staple (Foutou Banane)

This and the following recipe are variations on the staple meal, usually eaten in the evening by the entire family.

3 cups water
salt and black pepper to taste
3 plantains (or 4 very green bananas), peeled and chopped
1 onion, minced
4 ounces smoked meat (or smoked lean bacon), chopped
1 ounce ghee (clarified butter)

Lightly season water with salt and pepper, and bring to a boil.
Add plantains and the rest of the ingredients.
Simmer gently until the bananas are tender.
Drain off all the water and puree solids in a blender, or mash.
Serve hot or warm with fish or meat.

Mashed Yams (Foutou)

Yams may substitute for plantains or green bananas as the staple in a meal.

1 pound true yams (*Dioscorea alata*, not sweet potatoes), peeled and cut into chunks
4 cups water
salt, pepper, and flaked red pepper to taste

(*continued*)

Place yams in a pot with water and bring to a boil. Cook until soft, about 20–30 minutes.
Drain and discard water
Pound yams with a mortar into a paste (or use a food processor).
Season well.
Serve with any meat dish.

GROUNDNUTS AND PEANUTS IN AFRICA

The Bambara groundnut (*Vigna* or *Voandzeia subterranea*) was a common crop all over the drier belt of central Africa. In terms of nutrition, it is similar to the peanut, though it yields less oil. It is a complete food and formed the food base for many farming communities throughout Africa. Like the peanut it grows underground and can be eaten raw when fresh or under-ripe. It has largely been supplanted by the cultivated peanut, mainly because of the peanut's greater oil content (which means it is a cash crop), and because cultivars of the peanut have greater yields, whereas there are no cultivars (only local races) of the groundnut. Today, "groundnut" means peanut throughout much of Africa, though scientific and food interest in the Bambara groundnut is growing.

Sweet Rice Porridge (Bouiller)

This is a common sweet snack, available from street vendors (see box "Groundnuts and Peanuts in Africa").

2 cups rice
4 cups water
½ cup natural peanut butter
½ cup sugar (to taste)

Boil rice in water, uncovered, until still chewy (about 10 minutes).
Mix a few tablespoons of the rice liquid with the peanut butter to make a slurry.
Add peanut butter and sugar to taste to rice (add more boiling water if necessary; porridge should have plenty of liquid).
Stir and mix well. Cover, and simmer on very low heat for 5–10 minutes until rice is completely soft.
Serve as a snack.

CHAD

This landlocked central African country was a former colony of France. The tropical southern lowland produces grains, fruit (papaya, pineapples), and vegetables (peppers, peanuts, beans, tomatoes, squash) in small farms. The north is largely desert, part of the Sahara, where drought-resistant crops such as sorghum and millet are grown and cattle are raised. Occasional drought and desertification in the north contribute to tensions in the country.

The north is largely Muslim. The southern people are largely Christian and animist. French and Arab elements modify the common central African dishes.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, sorghum, or millet porridge; squash, peanuts.
- Meat: goat, sheep, beef; fish from the Niger River; chicken and ducks, particularly in the south.

Typical Dishes

- The basis of much cooking in the north is flavoring with, and even cooking in, butter or yogurt. Northerners also eat far more meat than southerners, and far less fish. Dishes include grilled meats, rice cooked with butter, and varieties of couscous.
- In the south, peanuts fulfill the same role as butter in the north. Stews of squash or greens; fish cooked with okra; and sweet potato chips are some of the dishes. Snacks include various fries from millet or sweet potatoes.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals, the heaviest in the evening, with a midday snack are common in the north. In the south, people eat three meals a day whenever possible.
- Dining in the north is similar to Arab culture: men and women eat separately, men before the women, all eating with their right hands out of a common dish. In the south, people sit on mats around separate common dishes of the staple

(rice, sorghum, or millet porridge) and one or more side dishes. The whole family normally eats together.
- Snacks, often fried nibbles bought from food stands, are commonly eaten at any time of day.

Hot Breakfast Cereal (La Bouillie)

This is a common breakfast dish. Feel free to fit the recipe to your own taste: it varies from one household to another.

1 quart water
1 cup ground rice or semolina
3 TBS natural peanut butter
1 cup lukewarm water
3 TBS flour (wheat, millet, or maize)
½ cup yogurt
sugar to taste
1 cup milk

Boil the water.
Dribble the rice or semolina into the water in a steady stream, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon.
Combine peanut butter and flour, and mix with just enough lukewarm water to make a smooth slurry, and add to pot.
Add yogurt and sugar to taste.
Remove from heat.
Add milk to thin the porridge in the pot, or let each diner add milk at the table.
Allow a few minutes to settle, then serve for breakfast.

Squash with Peanuts

Squash and peanuts are common in the south. This dish is eaten as a side dish with a millet staple.

2–3 pounds squash, peeled and cubed
water, as needed
1 TBS cooking oil
3 cups shelled roasted peanuts, crushed
salt to taste
1 tsp unrefined sugar

Cook squash in boiling water to cover until soft but still whole. Drain and discard water.
Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add squash. Cook until completely soft (about 5 minutes), stirring often (squash pieces can be broken up).

Stir in peanuts, salt, and sugar.
Reduce heat. Simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve hot.

Sweet Potato Salad

Sweet potatoes, imported from the Americas, have become a major item of the diet. This salad accompanies the main dish for midday or evening meals.

3 large sweet potatoes
½ medium onion, chopped
lemon juice
peanut oil
salt and pepper to taste
2 medium firm tomatoes, sliced thin

Boil sweet potatoes in their skins until tender (about 20–30 minutes).
Cool, peel, and slice.
Add chopped onion.
Sprinkle with lemon juice and oil. Season to taste.
Garnish with tomato slices.
Chill and serve.

Meat and Okra Sauce

This sauce can accompany millet or sorghum staple for the main meal.

2 pounds beef or lamb, cubed
2 TBS cooking oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 tsp salt
¾ cup tomato paste
8 fresh okra pods or 5 ounces frozen okra, trimmed

Brown meat in oil.
Add onion and cook until golden.
Add salt and tomato paste diluted with an equal amount of water. Cover and simmer for about 1 hour, or until meat is tender.
Add boiling water if needed so that there is some sauce.
Add okra 30 minutes before the end of cooking period.
Serve with boiled rice.
Note: The smaller you cut the okra, the more glutinous the stew will be. Keeping the okra whole reduces stickiness.

Cooked Okra (Daraba)

Okra can be used as thickener for other vegetables, or as part of a vegetable dish.

Vegetable dish

2 cups vegetables of your choice: tomatoes, sweet potatoes, greens, diced or chopped
1 cup of fresh okra sliced crosswise into ¼-inch pieces
2 cups water
2 TBS natural peanut butter
1 bouillon cube, crumbled
salt and chili powder to taste

In a saucepan, place vegetables with okra and water, and gently cook until vegetables are tender, about 15–20 minutes.
Add the bouillon cube, and mix well with the vegetables.
Taste and adjust seasoning (the bouillon may provide enough salt).

Thickener

1 cup sauce (meat or vegetable)
1 TBS dried okra (available from most African and Middle Eastern shops)
1 cup boiling water

Heat the sauce in a saucepan.
Add dried okra, stirring well.
Adjust to desired thickness by adding boiling water if desired.

Southern Chad Peanut Sauce

Just as yogurt characterizes many North Chadian dishes, as most people are involved in livestock rearing, so does the peanut characterize much of southern Chad cooking.

5 TBS oil
2 pounds beef cubes, 1 inch or smaller, dredged in flour
½ tsp nutmeg
1 TBS chili powder
4 medium onions, sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
¾ cup tomato paste
salt and chili pepper to taste
6 cups water
½ cup natural peanut butter

Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a large, heavy saucepan.
Brown beef cubes.
Add nutmeg, chili powder, onions, garlic, tomato paste, salt, chili pepper, and water.
Simmer until the meat is tender, about 35–45 minutes.

Half an hour before serving, heat the peanut butter and 2 tablespoons of oil over medium heat in a separate pan. Remove from heat.
Add peanut butter mixture slowly to beef stew and simmer over low heat for 20 minutes.
Serve over rice.

Fruit Juice (Jus de Fruit)

Any common tropical fruit is used. These are drunk as snacks during the day, or provided to guests.

3 ice cubes
1 large mango (or 1½ cups of pulp of your favorite fruit; orange, pineapple, guava, and papaya are the most common fruits used in Chad), peeled, pitted, and cubed
2 cups milk
3 TBS sugar
¼ tsp cardamom powder

Crush ice in a blender
Add mango or other fruit, milk, sugar, and cardamom; blend well.
Serve immediately.

Millet Snack

The Ouaddai area, east of the country, is arid and suited to millet crops. This snack is eaten at any time of day.

2 cups millet flour
1 cup wheat flour
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup peanut oil
1 egg, beaten
vegetable oil for deep-frying

Combine the millet and wheat flours and the sugar.
Gradually warm the cup of peanut oil and pour it onto the flour mixture.
Add the egg, and mix well until the mixture forms a firm dough.
Knead the dough for 5 minutes.
Roll out on a lightly floured board to about ⅕-inch thick.
Cut the dough into ribbon-like strips with a pastry cutter.
Heat oil for deep-frying to about 300°F.
Fry the strips a few at a time until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels and serve hot, warm, or cold.
Best eaten on the day they are made.

CHECHNYA

Though a member of the Russian Federation, Chechnya had been in rebellion for independence during the past decade. The north is a rolling plain; the south, a series of mountains leading up to the Caucasus range. The climate is continental: hot summers and cold winters, enabling a range of grains, fruits, vegetables, sheep, and pigs to be raised.

The population is largely Muslim with a Christian Russian minority. Food choices are similar to those of North Caucasus, though there is a marked Russian influence in the foodstuffs used and some of the dishes.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are meat (preferably mutton), and wheat or other grains.
- Potatoes are common, as are varieties of cabbage, beets, pumpkins, and orchard fruits. Wild greens such as nettles are collected during the season, as are mushrooms from the southern mountain slopes.
- Mutton and, for nonMuslims, pork are available meats.

Typical Dishes

- Major delicacies are sheep innards, and a great favorite and staple are stuffed pancakes of various sorts.
- Salads, with beets, potatoes, and preserved meat.

Styles of Eating

- When possible, most people eat three meals a day, the heavier one often at mid-day.
- Given centuries of Russian influence, dining rules follow those of European Russia. Table settings are European.
- Snacks are common. A range of snacks, particularly savory meat or vegetable pies/tarts, are normally served to guests, together with hot tea.

Beef and Potato Salad (Vainakh Saladi)

Salads, often relying heavily on beets or meat, accompany most meals.

8 ounces boiled beef, diced
8 ounces boiled potatoes, diced
1 ounce freshly picked, young green peas (or frozen, thawed, and briefly parboiled)
1 ounce pickled dill cucumber, diced
salt and pepper to taste
2 hard-boiled eggs, quartered
1 cup sour cream

In a bowl, mix well the potatoes, peas, cucumber, salt, and pepper.
Arrange the egg quarters on top.
Serve with sour cream.

Small Meat Pies (Chuda)

These are served as snacks, often to guests.

8 ounces mutton or lamb (or other meat) minced
1 onion, minced
salt and pepper to taste
10 ounces flour
½ cup kefir (a sour milk available from Russian shops; or substitute equal amounts of water and yogurt, or buttermilk)
3 ounces butter
½ tsp baking soda
1 TBS oil
2 TBS melted butter

Mix well the meat, onion, salt, and pepper. Set aside until needed.
In a food processor, blend salt, flour, kefir, butter, and baking soda just until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough and knead for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Divide dough into 12 pieces. With floured hands, shape into balls.
Roll out balls on a floured surface into about ½-inch-thick disks.
Put about 1½ to 2 TBS of the reserved meat mixture on each disk, leaving a ¼-inch margin around the edge.
Place another disk on top to cover. Seal the edges well with your fingers or the tines of a fork.
Brush the tops of the cakes with oil, and make a small hole about a pencil's width on the top crust.
Place on a greased cookie sheet, then bake in a 450°F oven until browned (5–10 minutes).

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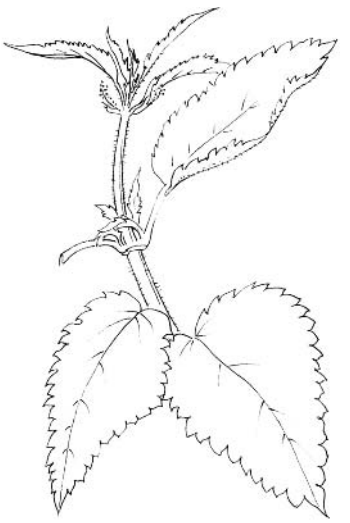


STINGING NETTLE

Remove from oven and pour a few drops of melted butter through the hole on each *chuda*.
Serve with tea as a snack, hot or cold.

Pumpkin Tarts (Khingalsh)

Vegetarian tarts are a common snack.

1 tsp salt
¼ tsp baking soda
1½ pounds wheat flour
2 cups kefir (a sour milk available from Russian shops; or substitute equal amounts of water and yogurt, or buttermilk), warm
¾ cup hot water
5 ounces butter, melted

Sift salt and baking soda with the flour.
Pour in kefir gradually while mixing with a wooden spoon to make dough.
Knead dough for 10 minutes until soft.
Divide dough into 8 pieces and roll into ⅛-inch-thick disks.
Put filling on half of one disk; fold over the other half to form a crescent.
Press the edges well to seal with the fingers or a fork, and bake at 375°F for 15–20 minutes until light brown.
Using tongs, dip the pastries quickly in hot water, and brush with melted butter.
Serve with extra melted butter as a dip.

Filling

1½ pounds pumpkin, unpeeled, cubed
water
1 large onion, chopped fine
1 TBS oil
1 tsp salt
2½ ounces sugar

Place pumpkin cubes in a microwaveable container.
Add ¼ cup water. Partly cover and microwave in an 800-watt oven for 15–20 minutes, or until pumpkin is very tender.
Scoop out pulp from the peel and reserve. Discard peels.
Meanwhile, fry the onion in oil until softened.
Add to reserved pumpkin with salt and sugar, and mash together thoroughly.

Nettle-Stuffed Pancakes (Kholtmash)

As in many Eastern European countries, wild greens and fruits supplement the diet (or, in the case of the affluent, satisfy nostalgia). In Chechnya, nettle pancakes are part of the tradition of gathering wild foods. Young stinging nettle leaves (the top shoots only) can be collected in the spring, provided they have not

been sprayed. They must be collected with thick gardening gloves, as they sting if handled gently or brushed against.

1 pound cornmeal
3 ounces wheat flour
2 cups warm water
½ cup sour cream for serving

Mix cornmeal and flour in a bowl.
Gradually add warm water to make dough (add water as needed).
Knead for 5–10 minutes to form a smooth, elastic dough.
Divide dough into 8 portions.
Roll each portion into a ⅛-inch-thick disk.
Put filling on one disk, cover with another; press edges well together to seal.
Place each *kholtmash* into salted boiling water and boil for 5 minutes. Drain.
Serve topped with sour cream.

Filling

3 ounces mutton fat or beef suet, chopped (or substitute lard)
3 ounces young stinging nettle leaves, rinsed and finely chopped (or chopped fresh or frozen spinach, thawed)
2 ounces spring onion, chopped fine
1 tsp fresh thyme, minced
salt, black pepper to taste

Warm fat in a saucepan.
Add all the other ingredients. Mix well.
Divide into 8 portions.

Steamed Mutton Stew (Adzhabsanda)

Mutton, preferably fat mutton, is the most highly desired meat. This stew is served for winter meals, together with dark bread.

1 pound potatoes, cubed
½ pound carrots, cut in julienne strips
1 pound mutton
¼ pound mutton fat, preferably from sheep's tail
2 tomatoes, sliced
2 onions, sliced
2 bell peppers, seeded and sliced into rings
3 ounces garlic, peeled, whole
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
salt, pepper to taste

Layer potatoes and carrots in the top pan of a double boiler or a heatproof bowl.
Next spread a layer of sliced tomatoes, onions, peppers, and whole garlic cloves.
Finally, spread a layer of sheep's fat and meat.

(*continued*)

Between layers, sprinkle with salt, pepper, and cilantro.
Make sure the top layer is at least 2 inches below the rim of the bowl or pan.
Place over the bottom pan of the double boiler, or in a larger pot.
(If using a heatproof bowl, fill the outer pot with water only midway up the sides of the bowl, so as not to get the boiling water splashing in. Cover securely with aluminum foil.)
Cover the top pan of the double boiler, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and gently simmer for 1½ hours (and up to 4 hours for better flavor).
Replenish with more boiling water as needed.
Serve as soup or stew.

CHILE

Chile, a Spanish colony until independence in 1818, is a narrow country in west South America facing the South Pacific Ocean. Its terrain ranges from arid desert in the north to a fertile central valley with a Mediterranean climate, ideal for abundant cultivation of fruits, vegetables, fish, meat, and grain. Chile's produce is widely exported, including fine wines.

Chileans are mostly European or mixed European-Amerindian (mestizos), with a minority of Japanese immigrant settlers.

Chilean cuisine is rich and diverse, most noted for its use of all types of seafood and fish. Spanish, Japanese, and German (from immigrant settlers) elements are evident. Chile also has many dishes similar to those of neighboring Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Foodstuffs

- Potatoes, maize, beans, and bread are staples. Wheat and oats, beans, corn, and garlic are other common foodstuffs.
- Beef, poultry, pork, and sheep are raised.
- The long coastline yields fish and seafood that is exported worldwide. Fish and seafood commonly eaten in Chile include salmon, sea bass, *congrio* (often mistranslated as conger eel, but is not an eel), abalone, clams, mussels, crab, lobsters, squid, octopus, and scallops. Unusual items are sea urchin, seaweed, and sea-squirt (resembling a purple hand grenade). Dried seaweed is used as a flavoring agent.
- Fruit: apples, pears, peaches, grapes, raspberry, other berries.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, chili pepper, spices, herbs. *Pebre* is a popular hot table sauce.

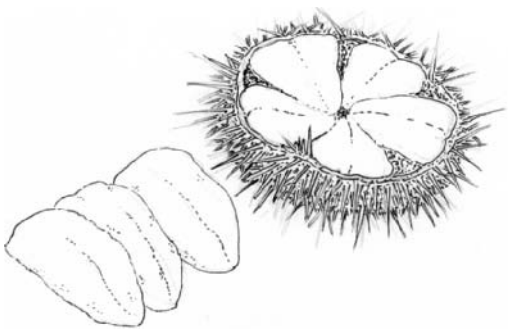
Typical Dishes

- Spanish-influenced stews: chicken with potatoes and green peppers (*cazuela de ave*); southern stew of beef, eggs, and potatoes (*Valdiviano*).
- Corn dishes: beef or chicken corn casserole (*pastel de choclo*); bean and corn chowder (*porotos granatos*); mashed corn pastries (*humitas*), baked in cornhusks, a summer favorite; sweet corn flan topped with caramel.

- Grilled meats: *asado* or *parillada*.
- Fish and shellfish soups or stews: *caldillo* or *chupe*. Seafood dishes include baked/grilled crab, clams as appetizers; fresh fish/shellfish marinated in lemon, onions, and chili (*ceviche*). Seaweed dried into a cake (similar to Japanese *nori* or Welsh *laverbread*) is sprinkled onto some soups or stews.
- *Pan amasado*, a wood-fired, oven-baked bread, is a regional treat.
- Vegetable dishes: avocado, tomato, and heart of palm sandwich; fried pancakes of pumpkin and flour (*sopaipillas*; a rainy day treat).
- *Empanadas* (savory turnovers) are popularly served as a first course for meals, and also for festival and celebration treats. A unique Chilean filling is simply onions and chili pepper. Cheese or seafood fillings are also typical.
- Drinks: juices of raspberry or exotic fruits; local and international bottled carbonated drinks; *yerba mate*, a high-caffeine tea from the leaves of a holly-like shrub; apple juice (*chicha fresca*). (*Chicha* in Chile is usually a three-day-fermented grape juice, boiled and bottled with honey. Other South American countries make *chicha* from different fruits and may or may not be fermented.)

Styles of Eating

- Chileans usually eat four meals a day, beginning with a light breakfast of toast with a well-sugared cup of tea or coffee.
- Lunch, the day's main meal, is from about 1 to 3 p.m. Most people take a longer lunch break to enjoy a three-course meal, usually starting with soup or other appetizers, bread or rolls; main course of fish or meat; and dessert of fruit salad, flan, or sweet pastry.
- Between 5 and 7 p.m., Chileans have snacks called *onces* ("elevens"), bread or roll, or a sandwich or savory pastry, plus tea or coffee.
- Dinner is eaten late, usually between 9 p.m. and midnight.
- Snacks: from street kiosks, convenience stores, or delis. Cafés, called *fuentes de soda* (soda fountains), or *schoperías* (from German *schop*, meaning "draft beer") also serve sandwiches and savory pastries. Most popular snack is *el completo*, hot dog with everything—mayonnaise, ketchup, *guacamole*, and tomatoes; toasted cheese sandwiches come with steak or ham, and with fresh vegetables.
- Drink/dessert: soaked dried peaches, barley, and cinnamon make an unusual juice cum dessert, traditionally mixed in a clay pot and served very cold.
- Desserts: German-style *kuchen*, which are cream-filled pastries with fresh raspberries, apricots, or other fruits and nuts; Spanish-type pastries called *alfajores*, spread with milk jam (*dulce de leche*); chilled rice pudding with milk, sugar, and cinnamon; fruit salad with apples, peaches, bananas, oranges, or exotic fruit.
- Many restaurants, bars, and cafes offer European (Italian, German, French, etc.), Asian (Japanese, Chinese, Thai, etc.) cuisines and American fast food in cities.



SEA URCHIN

Shrimp Soup (Chupe de Camarones)

The long Chilean coastline means that fresh seafood is readily available and features heavily in the cuisine.

2 cups water
1 cup white wine
1 pound fresh shrimp with shells (peel shells and set aside separately from shrimp meat)
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
3 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
2 tomatoes dipped in boiling water for 30 seconds, peeled and chopped
2 TBS tomato paste
2 TBS chopped fresh thyme
2 TBS chopped fresh oregano
salt and pepper to taste
fresh thyme, oregano to garnish

In a large nonaluminum saucepan, put water, white wine, shrimp shells, celery, and carrot.
Bring to a boil, lower heat, and simmer for 20 minutes.
Turn off heat. Strain the shells and vegetables, pressing well to extract flavors. Set the broth aside.
Warm olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat.
Stir-fry onion and bell pepper for 5 minutes.
Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, thyme, and oregano.
Add reserved broth and bring to a simmer.
Stir in shrimp meat and simmer for 3 minutes or until pink.
Season to taste and ladle into bowls.
Add garnish and serve immediately with rolls or crusty bread, as a first course for a meal or as a light evening dish.

Beef and Corn Casserole (Pastel de Choclo)

This casserole is served as a main dish.

3 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
½ tsp sweet paprika
¼ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp dried powdered oregano
salt to taste
freshly ground pepper, to taste
1 pound ground beef
¼ cup raisins, soaked in water and drained
2 hard-boiled eggs, sliced into 8 wedges
12 pitted black olives, coarsely chopped

Heat oil over medium heat.
Stir-fry onion until softened.
Stir in garlic, paprika, cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper.

(*continued*)

Add beef and cook until brown.
Place meat in a buttered casserole. Press egg slices, raisins, and olives into meat.
Spread the topping, and sprinkle with paprika and sugar.
Bake at 350°F for 30–45 minutes or until browned.
Serve hot (with an avocado salad and *pebre* or other peppery sauce, if desired).

Topping

5 cups frozen corn, thawed and drained
1 cup milk
salt
pepper
4 TBS butter
1 small onion, minced
1 tsp sweet paprika
2 tsp confectioners' sugar

In blender, puree corn with 1 cup milk to a thick paste.
Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
Heat butter in a frying pan; stir-fry onion until soft.
Stir in the corn paste and cook until warmed through.
Remove from heat.

Avocado Salad (Salada de Palta)

Salads accompany many meals.

juice of 1 lemon
2 avocados, diced
1 sweet onion, sliced into rings
2 large firm tomatoes, skinned and diced
olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
fresh cilantro (optional)

In a bowl, mix lemon juice gently with the avocados so that they do not discolor.
Add the onion and tomatoes.
Mix in the olive oil, salt, and pepper.
Garnish with cilantro.

Chilean Hot Pepper Sauce (Pebre)

This is a table condiment.

1 medium onion, finely chopped
1–2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
3 TBS finely chopped fresh cilantro
2 TBS finely chopped fresh parsley

1–6 fresh, hot green chili peppers, seeded and finely chopped
4 TBS olive oil
1 TBS lemon juice
salt to taste

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and allow to sit at room temperature for at least 1 hour. Serve with any vegetable or meat dish.

Nut and Orange Pie (Postre de Nueces y Naranja)

This pie is a common dessert served in many households.

Base

1 cup ground nuts (almonds, walnuts, or other)
3 TBS sugar
6 TBS melted butter

Filling

½ cup sugar
1 cup fresh orange juice (unsieved)
4 TBS cornstarch
½ cup water
2 egg yolks
2 TBS butter
1 pound oranges, cut up into segments, without the peel and pith
4 TBS orange marmalade, diluted with 2 TBS orange juice and sieved

Mix the base ingredients and press onto the bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie pan.
Set aside.
In a pan, mix sugar, orange juice, and corn flour diluted in water.
Cook to thicken over medium heat.
Turn off heat and quickly stir in yolks and butter, mixing well.
Let cool. Spoon over nut base.
Arrange orange segments in concentric circles.
Top with diluted marmalade.
Put under a hot grill to glaze for a few minutes.
Serve cold.

CHINA

China, with a population of more than 1 billion, is the most populous country on earth. Although in area it is the fourth largest, much land is not arable due to high mountains and subarctic or desert conditions. Conditions north of the Yellow River are cooler and favor the production of millet, wheat, and particularly sorghum, which is the traditional grain since prehistoric times. In the south, subtropical to tropical conditions favor the growing of rice, which has become the standard staple throughout China.

One of the world's oldest enduring civilizations, China has strongly influenced the cultures of Korea, Japan, and most of east and Southeast Asia. Its population is predominantly Han Chinese, with many large and small ethnic groups: Mongol, Tatar, Manchu, Uighur, Lao, Miao, and so on, with their own languages and cultures. Taoist, Buddhist, and polytheistic rituals are common, and there are also practicing Muslims and Christians.

Chinese cuisine is one of the two greatest in the world (the other is French). Recipes recorded centuries ago are still being made today. Frequent famines and limited agricultural land have engendered an appreciation of food at all levels of society, resourcefulness, and lack of waste in using food ingredients. Although there are many styles of cooking and thousands of recipes, these can be classified into four main regional cuisines: north, inland or western, coast or eastern, and southern, differentiated by climate, foodstuffs, and seasonings. What all share is the ideal that a meal should offer a range of tastes—sweet, salty, sour, pungent, or bitter—and that methods of preparation be varied (fried, roasted, steamed, braised, etc.). Flavors, colors, and textures are expected to balance, and there is an underlying belief in the intrinsic medicinal and health-giving properties of food.

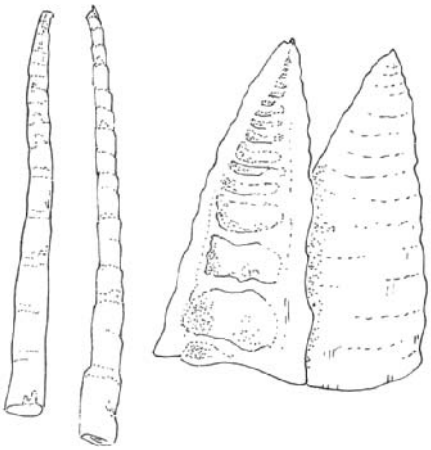
Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat noodles, bread, or sorghum in the north (Beijing, Shandong, Honan, including Mongolia, Sinjiang, Manchuria). Rice is less frequently eaten. In the west (Sichuan, Yunnan), east (Fukien, Shanghai), and south (Guangdong), rice.
- Meat and protein: in the north, mainly mutton, goat, yak, horse; countrywide, pork, beef, chicken, duck, carp, dried and fresh fish or shellfish, other seafood and exotica; mainly south, sea cucumber, shark's fin, jellyfish, snake, bird's nest; soybean products.

- Apples, Asian pears, bananas, citrus, melon, plums, pomegranate, tropical fruit (lychee, mango), walnuts, almonds, melons.
- Potatoes, pumpkin, cabbage and its relatives (broccoli, cauliflower, flowering cabbage), mustard leaves and roots, bamboo shoot, peanut, radish, water chestnut, winter melon, bitter melon, garlic chives, gourds, fungi, bean sprouts.
- Seasonings: ginger, garlic, green onions, fermented soybean paste, soy sauce, oyster sauce, chilies (mainly west, especially Sichuan), Sichuan pepper.
- Drinks: tea; alcoholic drinks brewed from *kaoliang* (sorghum) rice and other grains; wine; fruit juice; bottled fizzy drinks; mineral water.

Typical Dishes

- North: meat, wheat or maize breads, subtle seasoning (though Shandong uses lots of garlic, green onions, and chives), Beijing roast duck, tea-smoked chicken, mutton or goat soup (*quan yang tang*), hot pot, meat-filled dumplings (*shui jiao or jiao zi*).
- West: hot, spicy dishes, such as Sichuan roast duck, spicy vegetable pickles, Ma-Po's bean curd.
- East: braising or red cooking in the region's excellent soy sauce; sophisticated, cosmopolitan dishes from Shanghai; bird's nest soup; seafood in gravy; red-cooked pork or chicken.
- South: subtly flavored seafood and chicken; stir-fries; steamed dishes; shark's fin soup; barbecued/roast pork; *dim sum* (tiny dumplings and appetizers).



BAMBOO SHOOTS

Styles of Eating

- Three meals daily and snacks.
- Main meals eaten as a family. All side dishes are placed at the same time in the middle of the table for diners to help themselves. Each diner must be sure others have had their share.
- Each diner uses chopsticks, a bowl for the staple and another bowl for soup; occasionally, individual plates for side dishes.
- Rice is eaten by bringing one's bowl to the mouth to scoop rice in with chopsticks.
- Breakfast: in the north, wheat noodles (*mian tiao*) or steamed bread (*man tou*) with egg soup; maize porridge; tea. Elsewhere, rice porridge or noodles, fried bread sticks, tea.
- Lunch: quick meals of noodles with/without soup (with vegetables, bits of meat or poultry); in the north, wheat noodles or flat bread; in the south, rice noodles or plain rice.
- Dinner: countrywide, rice—two to four side dishes (soup; stir-fried vegetables; roast, fried, or stir-fried meat; poultry or fish). In the north, more frequently, steamed bread or wheat noodles than rice.

- Snacks: north, round flat bread (*huo shao*) with salty vegetable pickle (*xian cai*); south, bite-sized savory or sweet pastry (*dim sum*); countrywide, noodles with or without soup.
- Families eat out often. For banquets on special occasions, dishes are served one after the other, and wine and beer are consumed during the meal. Rice and soup come only in the end.

Hot Pot (Huoguo)

This is a cold-weather dish widely eaten in Shandong and elsewhere in northern China. It is cooked at the table in a traditional chafing pot. Use a fondue set, electric wok or frying pan, or a heatproof casserole over a flat tabletop burner (butane-fueled, available at Oriental food stores). Skinless chicken breast or pork may be used instead of beef or lamb, but all meat used must be sliced very thinly so that they cook immediately. Because each diner is actively involved in the cooking, this is a very convivial dish. If diners are not very comfortable using chopsticks, use fondue forks or a ladle for scooping out ingredients from the cooking pot onto each bowl. This dish makes a complete evening meal and is usually eaten with plain steamed buns (man tou), or sesame- and green-onion-flavored buns.

6 cups any soup stock, boiling hot
1½ pounds lamb or beef, sliced paper thin into 1½ × 3-inch pieces
1 Chinese cabbage (*bok choy*), cut into 3-inch pieces
2–3 bunches fresh spinach, or flowering cabbage (*choy sum*), cut into 3-inch-long pieces
2 cups bean vermicelli (also called cellophane noodle), softened in warm water for 15 minutes, cut into 6- to 8-inch lengths
2 blocks firm bean curd, cubed

Dipping Sauce

(The quantities given below for the sauce ingredients may vary, depending on each diner's taste.)

4 TBS green onion, chopped
4 TBS sesame seed paste (available from Asian shops, or as tahina from Middle Eastern or health-food stores)
4 or more TBS vinegar
2 TBS sesame oil
2 TBS fermented bean curd or dark miso
2 tsp sugar (optional)
2 tsp rice wine or sherry (optional)

First prepare the sauce. Mix all sauce ingredients thoroughly in a bowl.
Taste, adding more or less vinegar or sugar as desired.
Transfer to four individual sauce bowls.
(Alternatively, place all ingredients in separate bowls at the table. Each diner can mix his/her own sauce, choosing from among the given ingredients as desired.)
Arrange the prepared meat, vegetables, and other ingredients in separate dishes or in separate groups in one large dish on the table.

Carefully place enough stock to come about ⅔ of the way up the fondue pot or wok.
Set the appropriate heat source at medium to high heat.
When the stock boils, each diner takes a slice of meat and dips it into the pot until just done, then dips the meat into sauce and eats.
After a few helpings of meat, put in the vegetables and bean curd, similarly dipping them into the sauce before eating.
Finally, put in the noodles; allow to cook briefly, then serve with the soup.
The stock must simmer continuously.

Tomato and Egg Soup (Xi Hong Shi Ji Dan Tang)

This is a very simple and quickly made dish from Shandong (northern China) served with wheat noodles, steamed bread (*man tou*), or flat bread (*huo shao*) usually for breakfast or a light lunch or as a snack.

2 TBS oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 tomatoes, chopped
5 cups any soup stock
salt to taste
4 eggs, beaten
3 stalks green onion or garlic chives, chopped
4 stalks fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)

In a saucepan or wok, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onion and fry until softened, for about 3–5 minutes.
Add tomatoes and stir-fry until soft.
Add soup stock and salt; cover and bring to a boil.
Stir in eggs.
When eggs are done, turn off heat.
Sprinkle with green onion and cilantro (if using).

Smoked Chicken Beijing Style (Xun Ji)

This aromatic and delicious dish is as well loved as roast duck, the most famous Beijing dish. It can be eaten hot or cold. Serve with hot rice for an evening meal with soup or stir-fried vegetables. Instead of a whole chicken, separate portions such as quarters or whole legs may be used.

2 TBS whole Sichuan pepper
2 TBS salt
1 small, tender chicken, about 2 pounds, cleaned and wiped dry
1 green onion
3 slices fresh ginger
2 star anise
1 1-inch-long cinnamon stick

(*continued*)

1 cup soy sauce
½ cup sugar
½ cup flour
½ cup black tea leaves
2 TBS sesame oil
3 sprigs fresh cilantro for garnish
large sheet of foil

Over low heat, dry fry the Sichuan pepper and salt in a skillet for 1–3 minutes, until aromatic.
Crush this mixture coarsely and rub all over chicken, inside and out.
Place in a covered container and refrigerate for 5 hours or overnight.
In a large pot, bring 8 cups water to a boil.
Add green onion, ginger, anise, cinnamon, and soy sauce; simmer for 10 minutes.
Add chicken; let simmer for 10 minutes. Make sure chicken is completely immersed.
Take chicken off and let cool.
Preheat oven to 375°F.
In a metal or preferably disposable roasting pan (it will be scorched), lay a large sheet of foil, enough to generously overhang sides of pan.
Place sugar, flour, and tea leaves on foil.
Put the roasting pan over low heat, until the sugar and tea mixture starts to scorch and copiously smoke. It is this smoke that will flavor the chicken. (If you have a smoke alarm, it may be best to do this step outdoors on a barbecue.)
Place the chicken on a roasting rack over the smoking tea mixture.
Bring foil over chicken and fold to seal.
Place in the oven and bake for 30 minutes.
Unwrap chicken, brush with sesame oil, turn over, and return to oven, uncovered.
Bake for another 10–15 minutes, or until browned.
Brush with more sesame oil and cut into 2-inch portions, leaving drumsticks and wings whole.
Arrange on a serving plate, roughly following the shape of a whole chicken.
Serve hot, garnished with fresh cilantro.

Sesame Chicken Salad (Bang Bang Ji)

This chicken and vegetable salad comes from western China, where chilies are liberally used. The sesame-seed dressing combined with ginger and garlic is very distinctive. The original dish called for green bean sheets (thin sheets made of mung beans), but here cucumber is used. Alternatively, use parboiled bamboo shoots, celery, carrots, lettuce, or a mixture of salad leaves of your choice. Serve as a refreshing summer dish for lunch on its own, or with chilled rice or wheat noodles.

1 TBS sesame seeds
1 pound whole boneless chicken breasts
6 cups water
1 cucumber, peeled and cut into julienne strips

Bake sesame seeds in a single layer on a roasting pan in preheated 350°F oven for 5–8 minutes, or until golden. Set aside.
Put chicken and water in a covered saucepan; slowly bring to a boil.
Remove from heat and let cool in the pan.
Drain, shred into julienne strips, and reserve until needed.
Meanwhile, prepare salad dressing.
Place cucumber in serving bowl, place chicken meat on top.
Pour dressing over and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Dressing

2 TBS sesame seed paste (tahina)
3 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS vinegar
1 tsp hot pepper oil or chili sauce (optional)
1 TBS sesame oil
1 TBS vegetable oil
½ tsp fresh ginger, minced
½ tsp garlic, minced

In a food processor or blender, blend all ingredients until smooth.

Ma Po's Bean Curd (Ma Bo Dou Fu)

This is another western Chinese specialty, normally peppery hot from chili oil and hot bean paste, the signature flavorings of Sichuan. The dish also uses soybean curd, one of the numerous products made from the versatile soybean.

Bean curd (*tofu*) comes in two general types: firm or soft ("silk") (see box "Bean Curd"). *Tofu* makes a good contrast with the texture of meat. If you leave out the meat for a vegetarian meal, you may prefer to use firm *tofu*. Serve with plain white rice and a side dish of stir-fried vegetables or soup.

3 TBS peanut oil
¼ pound ground pork or beef
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 TBS dark bean paste (dark miso)
2 TBS soy sauce
¾ cup soup stock
4 blocks bean curd (sold as tofu at Oriental groceries or major supermarkets), diced
2 tsp cornstarch
2 tsp cold water
1 tsp sesame oil
1 tsp hot chili oil or chili sauce (optional)
1 TBS spring onion, chopped
1 tsp ground Sichuan pepper

In a wok or large skillet, heat oil over high heat.
Stir-fry pork until brown.
Stir in garlic, bean paste, soy sauce, stock, and bean curd; cook for 5 minutes.
Mix cornstarch with water, and stir into meat mixture until thickened.
Turn off heat; stir in sesame oil, hot oil (if using), spring onion, and Sichuan pepper.
Serve hot.

BEAN CURD

Bean curd (*doufu* [Mandarin], *tofu* [Japan]) is a soybean derivative of Chinese origin. It is made by curdling "soy milk" obtained by soaking, grinding, boiling, and straining soybeans. Curdling is done by introducing gypsum (calcium sulfate) or some other coagulant to the fresh soy milk (somewhat like making cheese from rennet). The curds may then be drained lightly, drained in muslin in a form (to produce the brick shape found in most supermarkets), pressed to extract most liquid, or dried in a number of ways

There are hundreds of varieties of *tofu*, the differences depending on the coagulant, degree and fashion of pressing, and the drying process. Fresh curds normally have a high moisture content, which gives them a soft texture somewhat like custard (and can be eaten sweet or savory). Drier curds are firmer, the driest versions somewhat the texture of a white cheese like *feta*. Like cheese, bean curds can be fermented or infected by an edible bacillus. Freeze-dried *tofu*, notably the *koyadofu* from the Mount Koya monastery in Japan, are popular travel foods. Bean curd sheets, called *fupi* in China, are made by boiling soy milk and skimming the thin skin that rises up. These are then eaten as is, dried, or folded and cut into various shapes. Fried bean curd is a common addition to many dishes.

The plasticity and wide variety of bean curd make it an essential element in Buddhist cooking (where meat is forbidden), with various methods used to flavor, color, and shape *tofu* into meat substitutes.

Dry Cooked Green Beans (Kan Pien Ssu Chi Tou)

This is often cooked as a side dish in various parts of the country. The same sauce and process can be used with bean sprouts, *bok choy*, or other vegetables.

1 pound fresh green beans, washed, drained, trimmed, and cut into 2-inch lengths
1 TBS water
2 TBS fermented black beans (available canned from Asian stores)
2 TBS soy sauce
¼ cup cold water
1 TBS cornstarch

Steam (or microwave with 2 tablespoons water) beans until just tender. Reserve 1 tablespoon water from beans.
Drain and rinse immediately in cold water.
Mix black beans, soy sauce, water, and cornstarch until very smooth.
Heat a wok over medium-high heat. Add water from beans and the cooked beans.
When beans are heated through, add the sauce.
Stir constantly to coat the beans.
Serve with hot cooked rice as soon as the sauce has thickened.

Steamed Buns with Barbecued Pork Filling
(Cha Shao Pao, Cha Siu Bao)

Although steamed buns (*man tou*) and dumplings are most commonly eaten in northern China, these food items have been perfected in the south. In Guangdong, steamed buns and dumplings are stuffed with choice bits of pork, seafood, chicken, and vegetables, artfully wrapped in the thinnest, often frilled, pastry, showcasing the colorful items within. These savory- and sweet-steamed pastries are included in the category of food called *dim sum* ("touch the heart"), in Cantonese.

There are restaurants that serve only *dim sum*, where it is possible to eat it not just for snacks, but also as a complete meal. Hot trolleys filled with assorted *dim sum* in small bamboo steamer baskets circle the dining room, and diners choose directly from the trolley, or from a menu. Most *dim sum* dishes are steamed and wrapped in pastry, and also include fried noodles, savory rice cakes, soups, and single servings of braised or stewed meat or seafood. There are also sweet *dim sum*: custard tarts, almond jelly with fruit, or sweet bean-filled pastries. Common to all is their bite-size proportion (normally only three or four pieces in one serving) and exquisite mix of textures and flavors. Tea goes perfectly with *dim sum*.

Stuffing

2 TBS oil
1 green onion, chopped fine
1 clove garlic, chopped fine
½ pound barbecued or roast pork, diced
2 TBS light soy sauce
2 TBS oyster sauce
1 TBS sugar
1 TBS cornstarch, dissolved in 2 TBS water

Heat oil in a wok.
Stir-fry scallion and garlic for 30 seconds.
Add pork. Stir-fry for 1 minute.
Add soy sauce, oyster sauce, and sugar.
Pour in dissolved cornstarch.
Stir quickly until pork is glazed.
Transfer the mixture to a bowl and allow to cool.

Basic Steamed Bun Dough

This dough can be formed into buns without a filling, and can be used as *man tou* to accompany the hot pot recipe above.

1 package dried yeast
1 TBS sugar
1 cup lukewarm water
4½ cups flour
¼ cup sugar
2 TBS vegetable oil
½ cup boiling water
2 TBS sesame oil

Dissolve yeast and sugar in lukewarm water.
Set in a warm place for 5 minutes until frothy.
Add 1 cup flour. Mix thoroughly.
Cover with damp clean towel.

(*continued*)

Let rise for 1 hour, until bubbles appear.
Add sugar and vegetable oil to boiling water. Stir well to dissolve sugar. Cool until lukewarm.
Pour into yeast mixture. Add remaining flour.
Knead dough on lightly floured board for 10 minutes, or until smooth and glossy.
Put into a large, greased bowl in a warm place. Cover with damp clean kitchen towel. Let rise until doubled, for about 2 hours.
Proceed as follows.

On a floured board, knead dough for 1 minute and roll into one long, 2-inch diameter cylinder.
Slice the cylinder crosswise into 1-inch pieces.
With a rolling pin, flatten each piece into 3-inch disks.
Place 2 tablespoons of filling in the center of each disk.
Gather dough up around the filling in loose folds. Bring folds up to top of bun and twist securely and firmly.
Place each bun on 2-inch square of plain or wax paper on a steamer tray. Cover with a damp towel.
Let rise for 1 hour in a warm place, until dough springs back when touched. Remove towel.
Steam over briskly boiling water for 10 minutes.
To eat: dip into sauce of 1 tablespoon soy sauce, ½ tablespoon vinegar, 1 teaspoon Chinese or other sharp mustard, and ½ teaspoon sesame oil.

Barbecued or Roast Pork (Cha Shao)

Of all meats, pork is most commonly used in China, except by the Muslims in western China. The pig is so respected that the Chinese ideograph for "home" is a combination of those used for "roof" and "pig."

This dish is a southern (Cantonese) specialty and is eaten hot or cold. It keeps well and is also used in fried rice or noodles and other dishes, such as in the steamed dumplings above. Barbecued pork is eaten with rice, side dishes of vegetables or soup for lunch or dinner. It is also good with rice porridge (*congee*) for a mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack. Barbecued pork may be dipped into a sauce of vinegar, soy sauce, and mustard. An alternative to red food coloring is to use 2 tsp of red bean curd, in which case reduce the soy sauce to 2 TBS.

1¼ pounds lean pork, loin or shoulder

Marinade

2 green onions, minced
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
5 TBS soy sauce
2 TBS rice wine or sherry (optional)
2 TBS sugar
1 TBS hoisin sauce
dash red food coloring

Syrup

2 tsp sesame oil
½ TBS sugar, corn syrup, or honey
½ TBS hot water

Slice pork into strips 8 × 1½ inches; lightly slash the surface (for faster absorption of flavors).
Mix the marinade ingredients, adding enough food color to tint meat a pale red.
Marinate pork refrigerated in a covered container for at least 3 but no more than 6 hours.
Turn pork occasionally.
Preheat oven to 350°F.
Place pork on rack in a roasting pan.
Roast for 10 minutes; baste with marinade.
Roast for a further 7–10 minutes. The pork must not be over-roasted or it will be dry.
Remove from oven and immediately brush with the syrup ingredients mixed together.
To serve, slice thinly, arranged on a serving dish.
Garnish with fresh cilantro or parsley.

Crisp-Soft Noodles with Pork and Vegetables (Liang Mian Huang)

Noodles have an important place in Chinese cuisine, and a recent archaeological find dates them to before 3000 BCE. The story that noodles were brought to Europe by Marco Polo in the thirteenth century is probably not true, since there is evidence of noodles in Italy well before that date.

Noodles of all types, wheat or rice, are eaten at all times, with or without soup. You can substitute chicken or deep-fried tofu for the pork. This makes a light lunch dish or a snack.

8 cups water
1 pound fresh noodles (or ¾ pound dried)
5 TBS peanut oil
½ tsp ginger, grated
½ tsp green onion, chopped
⅓ pound lean pork, cut into thin strips
2 cups Chinese cabbage, shredded
2 TBS chopped green onion for garnish

Seasoning

¼ tsp salt
1 tsp dark soy sauce
1 TBS light soy sauce
1 tsp rice wine or sherry (optional)
3 TBS chicken stock
1 tsp dark soy sauce
1 tsp cornstarch
½ tsp sesame oil

Mix seasoning ingredients; set aside.
Bring water to a boil in a large pot.

(*continued*)

Drop in noodles; bring back to boil. Add ½ cup cold water; boil for 4 minutes. (If using dried noodles, boil in the same way until done "al dente.")
Drain noodles. Set aside.
Heat wok over high heat. Add 3 tablespoons oil.
Fry noodles on one side until crisp at the edges. Turn and fry the other side until crisp.
Place on serving dish.
Return wok to heat with remaining oil.
Stir-fry ginger and green onion for 1 minute.
Add pork and cabbage, stir-fry for 4 minutes.
Add seasoning; cook for about 2 minutes.
Pour over noodles.
Garnish with chopped green onion.

Diced Chicken with Walnuts (Tao Ren Ji Ding)

After seafood and fish, chicken is the most esteemed by the southern Chinese, especially the Cantonese. This is a classic dish, served as a side dish with rice for lunch or dinner. Cashew nuts can be substituted for walnuts. Deep-frying ensures quick cooking, while the use of egg white and cornstarch marinade (a method known as velveting) preserves moistness and results in a silken texture.

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into bite-size cubes
1 cup walnuts or cashew nuts
about 4 cups peanut oil
3 slices fresh ginger
1 green onion, sliced into 2-inch pieces
1 large green bell pepper, cut into similar sized cubes as chicken

Marinade

1 egg white, beaten
1 TBS cornstarch
1 TBS soy sauce

Seasoning

2 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS rice wine (optional)
½ TBS vinegar
½ TBS cornstarch
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar

Mix chicken thoroughly with marinade ingredients. Set aside for 30 minutes.
Roast nuts in a 350°F oven for 5–10 minutes. Set aside.
In a bowl, mix thoroughly all seasoning ingredients. Set aside.
In a wok, heat enough oil for deep-frying to medium hot.
Deep-fry chicken for 1 minute.
Remove and drain on paper towels.
Pour off all oil from wok; add 2 tablespoons fresh oil.
Heat oil at high heat; stir in ginger and stir-fry for 1 minute.
Add green onion, stir-fry for a few seconds.

Stir in green pepper.
Stir in chicken and seasoning sauce; fry until thickened and heated thoroughly.
Stir in walnuts.
Serve at once.

Paper-Wrapped Chicken (Ji Bao Ji)

This is a specialty of eastern China. Enclosing the chicken and aromatic mushrooms, ham, and cilantro in paper and quick cooking at high heat preserves the intrinsic flavors of each item, which are released only when the parcels are opened. This is an elegant dish suitable for a family evening meal, serve with rice and vegetables or soup.

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, sliced into 12 pieces
3 dried shiitake mushrooms
¼ pound ham
12 sheets cellophane or wax paper, 10 × 10 inches
2 TBS sesame oil
12 stalks fresh cilantro
oil for deep-frying
5 stalks fresh cilantro, 3 small red radishes, or 1 tomato for garnish

Marinade

3 TBS soy sauce
½ tsp salt
1 TBS rice wine or sherry (optional)
1 tsp sugar
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Mix thoroughly the marinade ingredients and place in a bowl with the chicken. Set aside for 1 hour.
Soak dried mushrooms in hot water for 30 minutes. Remove stalk; slice into quarters.
Slice ham to the size of the cut mushrooms.
Place one sheet of cellophane on a flat plate; brush with sesame oil.
Lay in the center one piece each of cilantro, mushroom, chicken, and ham.
Fold over one corner of the paper over the filling, creating a triangle.
To seal the triangle, lay it so that the base is closest to you (the apex will be pointing away from you).
Fold over the right-hand corner of the triangle until its tip reaches roughly the midpoint of the opposite edge.
Fold over the other corner likewise; this creates an origami cup-like parcel.
Fold down the apex of the triangle and insert it into the pocket created by the topmost flap.
This way of folding ensures the parcel does not open during frying.
Heat oil to medium hot in a wok.
Fry the parcels, a few at a time, for about 1½ minutes on each side.

(*continued*)

When all have been fried, return all and fry again for 1½ minutes.
Drain parcels on paper towels.
Place on serving platter and serve 3 parcels per person.
Garnish platter with fresh cilantro and red radish or tomato slices.

Sweet Potatoes in Syrup

This is usually eaten in western China as a side dish, not dessert. In some places it is made with white potatoes.

2 cups or more oil for deep frying
1 pound sweet potatoes (or waxy white potatoes), peeled and cut into 2-inch cubes
1 cup water
⅔ cup sugar
2 tsp honey or corn syrup
2 tsp constarch dissolved in 2 TBS water
1 tsp sesame oil
1 tsp sesame seed (black or white)
2 TBS haw or plum jelly, diced

Slowly heat oil in a wok to moderate heat (350°F) and deep fry sweet potatoes until golden, a few at a time. Do not crowd the pan. Drain and set aside.
Pour off the oil.
Add water and sugar; stir until completely dissolved.
Stir in honey and cornstarch; cook until thickened.
Stir in sweet potatoes, sesame oil, and seeds, ensuring even coating of syrup.
Serve at once, topped with diced jelly.

Stir-Fried Chinese Cabbage

Green leafy vegetables on their own stir-fried as in this dish, or steamed, are highly appreciated in Cantonese cooking as the region excels in growing vegetables. Other vegetables, such as snow peas, spinach, broccoli, or even cos lettuce, may be substituted for cabbage. Alternatively, leave out the seasoning and cornstarch sauce, and serve with 2 tablespoons of oyster sauce poured at random over the vegetables.

3 TBS oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp salt
1 pound Chinese cabbage, sliced into 2-inch pieces
1 TBS rice wine or sherry (optional)
½ tsp sugar
1 tsp cornstarch dissolved in 1 TBS water

In a wok or a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat.
Add garlic and stir-fry until pale brown.
Add salt and cabbage; stir-fry quickly for 1 minute.
Add rice wine, sugar, and cornstarch mixture.

Stir thoroughly until thickened.
Serve hot.

Sweet Peanuts

Peanuts are raised extensively for making oil in the south and central regions. They are also used in making snacks.

1 pound peanuts
½ cup sugar
½ cup water
1 TBS peanut oil
5 tsp cornstarch, dissolved in ¼ cup water to make a slurry

Dry-fry the peanuts in a wok until very crisp. Remove and reserve.
In the wok, add the sugar and water to make a thin syrup.
When the syrup starts to boil, stir in the peanuts, peanut oil, and cornstarch slurry.
Continue to cook until peanuts are well coated with the thickened syrup.
Remove from heat, drop by teaspoonfuls well apart on an oiled or buttered cookie sheet, and allow to cool.

Fruit-Filled Watermelon (Shi Jin Guo Pin)

Chinese desserts are usually fresh fruits, or sweet porridges of beans or nuts such as walnuts, almonds, or gingko. A watermelon shell lends itself to being carved and decorated, in much the same way that winter melons are carved with dragons or phoenixes when used for soup. Substitute other fruits in season for any of the fruits given in the recipe below.

1 small watermelon, with stalk intact if possible
1 8-ounce can lychees, drained
1 8-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained
1 8-ounce can kumquats, drained
2 cups green grapes, peeled, halved, and seeded
2 Asian pears, peeled, cored, and diced
2 crisp apples, peeled, cored, and diced
2 yellow peaches, peeled, pitted, and diced
½ tsp almond extract

Cut off a third of the watermelon, leaving a decorative scalloped or toothed edge, if desired. Keep the cut-off part with stalk for a lid.
Scoop out the flesh in bite-sized cubes and discard seeds.
Mix watermelon cubes with rest of the ingredients, including canned syrup, in a large bowl.

(*continued*)

Pour fruit mixture into watermelon shell; replace lid.
Chill for 2 hours or more before serving.

Steamed Sponge Cake (Ma La Kao)

Cakes are not eaten as desserts, particularly after a multicourse meal. They are more likely eaten as snacks with tea, or in connection with a festival.

4 eggs, separated
1 cup light brown sugar
¾ cup milk
1½ cup flour
½ tsp baking soda, dissolved in ½ TBS water
2 tsp baking powder, dissolved in 1 TBS water
3 TBS lard or butter, at room temperature
3 TBS peanut oil
½ tsp vanilla (optional)

In a mixer, beat egg whites until stiff.
Add sugar in 3 portions, mixing well.
Add yolks and milk, mixing well.
Fold in flour; let stand for 4–6 hours.
Stir in dissolved baking soda and baking powder into flour mixture.
Mix in lard, oil, and vanilla (if using) lightly but thoroughly.
Pour into a greased 8-inch round or square cake pan.
Place in steamer to steam for about 20 minutes. (Steamer can be rigged from a wok with a cover. Set the cake pan on a rack or sturdy bowl in the wok. Carefully pour hot water into the wok. Water should not touch the cake pan.)
The cake is done when it springs back when touched.
Unmold cake after 5 minutes.
Cut into 2-inch squares or diamonds and serve warm with tea.

COLOMBIA

Colombia, the fourth largest country in South America, was a Spanish colony until 1830. The topography varies, from temperate alpine mountains (the Andean mountains extend the length of the country) to tropical Caribbean and Pacific coasts. Tropical crops such as rice, fruits, and vegetables are grown, and the cool highlands grow world-famous Colombian coffee.

Colombia's population is a diverse ethnic mix of Amerindians, Europeans, and Africans. Colombian food has Spanish elements and influences from its many ethnic groups. There are great regional differences, and in different areas of the country people pride themselves on their typical variations of national foods.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: beans, rice, corn, potatoes, plantains.
- Corn is eaten on the cob or ground into cornmeal and fried, baked, or steamed for assorted breads, pastries, and tortillas. Corn tortillas are wrapped around a filling for *tamales* or wrapped around an egg and fried to make egg-stuffed pancakes. In the coastal areas, banana leaves are used for the same purpose. They also impart a subtle flavor.
- Many Colombian fruits are unknown in North America, including several kinds of passion fruit and cactus fruit, and the ice cream bean.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, pepper, spices, herbs. *Hogao* is a distinctive Colombian flavoring of fried onions, tomatoes, and a marigold-like herb, used especially for *ajiaco* stew.

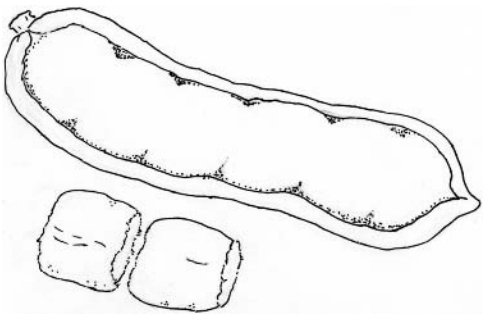
Typical Dishes

- The national dish is *bandeja paisa*, a tray of typical dishes, usually two or three kinds of grilled, fried, or roast meat; sausage; fried egg with staples such as beans, rice, fried green or ripe plantain; salad; and cornmeal fritters. Mini *paisa* are available for less hearty appetites.
- Cornmeal bread (*arepa*) is served with almost every meal. Different regions have their own ways of making it: bland (for example in Cali) or flavored (in Bogotá).

- Stews or soups of meat and vegetables: chicken with sweet corn, capers, cream and avocado (*ajiaco de pollo*); beef, pork, or fish with yams and cassava (*sancocho*).
- Fish and seafood, as well as rice, cooked in coconut milk are coastal specialties. *Pescado encurtido* is fish "cooked" in lemon juice, Colombia's version of Peruvian or Chilean *ceviche*.
- Tender breaded flank steak, the specialty of the capital city Bogotá, is a celebration dish.
- Boiled potatoes topped with a tomato and cheese sauce (*papas choreadas*) are a traditional accompaniment to steak dishes.
- Roast guinea pig is a favorite in the Andean highlands.
- Hot (drinking) chocolate with cheese (*santafereño*) is popular around Bogotá, eaten with buttered corn cakes or fried green plantains, sprinkled with salt.
- Typical drinks: milk and yogurt. Drinks from local fruits or creamed cereals, such as corn milkshake (*mazamorra*) and oatmeal (*avena*), are typical. *Champus* is fruit juice made of corn, lemon, pineapple, or other fruit, usually *mora* (similar to blueberry).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- European table settings and order of courses.
- Breakfast is substantial: eggs scrambled with tomatoes and onions; chocolate or coffee, juice, fried bananas; *calentao*—butter-fried rice with assorted meats, beans, or vegetables. The crisp rice layer produced is much fought over.
- The main meal is eaten between noon and 2 p.m. It usually consists of soup or other appetizer, main course, and a drink or dessert. The main course is beef, chicken, or fish, served with rice, red beans, vegetables, fried plantains, or salad.
- The evening meal is eaten early, around 7 p.m., with courses similar to the midday meal, but in smaller proportions.
- Snacks sold at roadside stalls include eggs scrambled with onions and tomatoes (the nation's favorite); boiled corn on the cob; cornmeal fritters; fried *empanadas* made of cornmeal dough, filled with cheese or meat, or, uniquely Colombian, egg; cheese-flavored breads; banana leaf–wrapped pastries filled with meat and vegetables (*tamales*). The ones from Tolima are famous.
- Desserts and sweets: Spanish-type, of eggs and milk—thin crepes (*obleas*) filled with milk jam; corn and cinnamon pudding (*natilla*); curds in syrup; rice pudding with coconut milk; wine-flavored and meringue-topped coconut custard pastries; guava-jelly-filled pastries.
- Drinks: *tinto* is a tiny cup of black coffee, drunk at all hours (Colombian coffee is mild). Many hot drinks are made of natural, unrefined sugar and boiling water (e.g., *agua de panela*), flavored with cheese, lime juice, or cinnamon. Bottled carbonated drinks; beer, rum, sugarcane spirits (*aguardiente*), sometimes aniseed flavored.



ICE CREAM BEAN

Poached Egg Soup (Changua con Huevo)

This soup is an appetizer for the midday meal.

3 cups chicken or beef broth
3 cups milk
salt, pepper to taste
4 eggs
½ cup spring onions, chopped
½ cup cilantro, chopped

In a saucepan, bring broth, milk, salt, and pepper to a boil.
Break the eggs one at a time into a small bowl; slide each egg into the boiling water, being careful not to break the yolk.
Cover pan; let boil for one minute. Turn off heat.
To serve, distribute spring onions and cilantro equally among the bowls; gently place egg over.
Ladle broth over egg.
Serve as an appetizer with crusty bread and butter or a maize roll.

Chicken and Potato Stew (Ajiaco de Pollo)

A rich stew common in rural areas for the midday meal.

4 chicken legs
2 large baking potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 quarts water
salt and pepper to taste
20 small (about 2 inches in diameter) salad or new potatoes, peeled or well scrubbed
4 boneless chicken breasts
4 corncobs, each sliced into 4 pieces
1 cup frozen peas
4 ripe avocados
1 small jar preserved capers, drained
½ cup thick cream
20 leaves fresh basil (or, if available, the marigold-like herb *guascas*)

Place chicken legs, cubed potatoes, water, salt, and pepper into a large saucepan and bring to a boil.
Add half of the basil leaves or *guascas*.
Turn down heat and simmer for about 1½ hours until potatoes and chicken have fallen apart, thickening the broth.
Add new potatoes, boneless chicken, corncobs, and remaining *guascas* (if using).
Simmer for 15 minutes, or until done.
Add peas and simmer for another 5 minutes.
Turn off heat.
Slice avocadoes into cubes. (Do this just before serving to prevent browning.)

(*continued*)

To serve, distribute all items evenly among diners.
Garnish each serving with a teaspoon of capers, a tablespoon of cream, avocado, and basil leaves (if not using *guascas*).

Cornmeal Bread (Arepa de Huevo)

This is a common side dish, served with almost every meal. There are many variations on this basic recipe that add onions, tomatoes, and sweet peppers.

1½ cups cornmeal, yellow or white (or masa harina)
2 tsp salt
¼ cup cooking oil
2 quarts water
2 eggs, beaten

Combine cornmeal, salt, oil, and water; bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer until thick. Turn off heat.
Spoon half the batter into a greased 9 × 9 inch baking pan.
Pour eggs over. Carefully add remaining batter.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 30 minutes, or until golden.

Fried Green Plantains (Patacones)

These are best eaten fresh. Serve for breakfast, with fried eggs or scrambled eggs with tomatoes and onion (*pericos*), or serve as a side dish for lunch or supper. These are excellent when topped with thin slices of firm white cheese (Mexican, feta, or similar).

4 green plantains (yellow or yellow-green ones will not give the desired result)
cooking oil
salt

To peel plantain, cut off each end. Slit the skin along one side, without cutting into the plantain itself.
Pry off peel. Slice each into 4 or 5 pieces.
Heat 1 inch cooking oil on medium heat until hot.
Fry plantains a few at a time, turning them over, until the pieces are pale gold.
Remove from pan and drain on paper towels.
Lay fried plantains between two sheets of wax paper.
Compress them gently to about ¼-inch thick.
Reheat oil. Refry plantains until golden brown.
Drain on fresh paper towels. Sprinkle with salt; serve at once.

Corn and Cinnamon Pudding (Natilla Santafereña)

Dishes labeled "Santafereño/a" in Colombia come from Bogotá or its environs, and often have milk or cheese as an ingredient.

2 cups milk
⅔ cup natural, unrefined sugar
3 cinnamon sticks
⅔ cup cornstarch
powdered cinnamon
1 cup sweetened whipped cream (optional)

Put 1 cup milk, sugar, and cinnamon in a saucepan.
In a bowl, dissolve cornstarch with remaining milk; add to saucepan.
Stir constantly over low heat until sugar has melted and mixture is thick.
Turn off heat.
Spoon into glass dessert dishes; sprinkle with cinnamon.
Chill one hour or more. Garnish with cream if desired.

CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (CONGO KINSHASA; FORMERLY ZAIRE)

This is one of the two nations called Congo and is not to be confused with the Republic of Congo (see next entry). A Belgian colony for almost a century, Congo attained independence in 1960, which was followed by a lengthy civil war. It is one of the largest—approximately one-fourth the size of the United States—and potentially richest countries in central Africa. Mismanagement, imperialist greed, and civil war have decimated the population and evaporated the country's wealth. Bordered by the Republic of Congo (the two capitals are across the Congo River from one another), Sudan, Uganda, and Angola, the country is almost landlocked, with one access to sea along the Congo River estuary.

Most of the country is savanna and the climate is tropical, ideal for subsistence farming of millet and other grains, fruits, and vegetables, and raising goats, cows, and chickens.

The population numbering around 60 million is composed of numerous ethnic groups speaking 700-odd different and often mutually incomprehensible languages.

Congo cooking is based on staple porridge eaten with vegetable-based sauces with fish or meat.

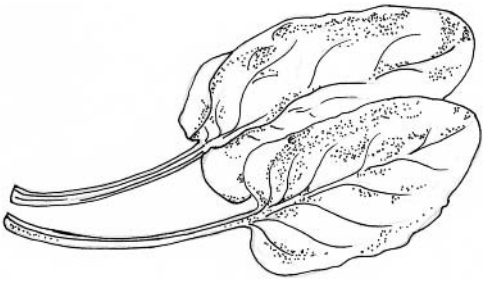
Foodstuffs

- Staples: millet, sorghum, manioc, maize, bananas, though they vary from place to place.
- Tropical fruits and vegetables.
- Meat consumption varies. Domestic meats—goat and beef—are available in the cities. In the countryside, bush meat (wild animals) is consumed avidly. Chicken is often available. Fish from the many streams and from the Congo river are often eaten, notably the *capitaine* (Nile perch).

Typical Dishes

- Stews are eaten along with the local staple.
- Fish cooked in stews or baked in banana-leaf packets.

Styles of Eating



SORREL

- Three meals a day are eaten when possible.
- Traditional and rural families eat together on a mat on the floor, around a shared pot of staple with as many side dishes as can be afforded.
- Breakfast usually consists of porridge or, in the cities, baked goods.
- The midday meal and the evening meal can be more substantial, though for many the midday meal is little more than a snack.
- Snacks include fried plantains and sweet potatoes or peanuts sold by street vendors at most hours.
- Drinks include both homemade and commercial beers, various sodas, and, increasingly, bottled water.

Fish and Pepper Sauce in Palm oil (Capitaine a Pili-pili)

Capitaine is a common name for the Nile perch, a large, tasty fresh-water fish common in rivers in central Africa.

1 cup palm oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 hot chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped (or left whole for milder heat)
2 pounds filleted fish (Nile perch or other white-fleshed fish)
salt and black pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large skillet.
Cook the onions and chili pepper until softened.
Cook fish in the onion and pepper mixture for a few minutes, then turn it over.
Adjust seasonings to taste.
Serve hot with *bâton de manioc* or other starchy foods.

Fish in Banana Leaf (Liboké de Poisson)

Liboké is a Lingala (one of Congo's many languages) word for the practice of cooking foods wrapped in leaves (more commonly banana or plantain) over coals (see box "Wrapped Foods").

1 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped fine
juice of 1 lemon
salt and cayenne pepper to taste
1 tomato, chopped and crushed (or equivalent canned crushed tomatoes)

(*continued*)

3 okra pods, stems removed, chopped
a bunch of sorrel leaves
1 cube soup stock, crushed (or 1 tsp stock powder)
2 pounds fresh-water fish cut into fillets, steaks, or pieces
4 aluminum foil sheets for wrapping, 10 × 10 inches

Mix oil, onion, lemon juice, salt, cayenne, and vegetables. Flavor with stock powder and mix thoroughly.
Add the fish and let marinate for $\frac{1}{4}$ hour.
Place a piece of fish and some of the marinade and vegetables in foil, and fold over at least three times to completely enclose the fish.
Cook the packets over an outdoor grill, over medium heat, or in a medium oven or steamer. Turn the packets after 10 minutes if using a grill.
After 20 minutes test a packet to check that the fish is cooked; if not, continue cooking, however do not overcook the fish or they will be dry.
Serve the packets with some *bâton de manioc* or *fufu*.

WRAPPED FOODS

Wrapping foods in leaves or clay, and baking them in the oven or the ashes, is one of the oldest forms of human cooking. It has two advantages: the material is cheap and easily available in places where this form originated (Africa, tropical America, Oceania), and it preserves much of the flavor and substance.

The most common wrapping material are large leaves: banana and taro leaves are the most well known. Thick clay is sometimes used as well, which hardens and is then broken to access the food.

Wrapped foods are also commonly steamed, the leaves contributing to the flavor of the dish. In China, food is wrapped in a special cellophane for frying.

Mbika *with Meat*

Mbika (also called *egushi*) is a kind of gourd common in west and central Africa whose seeds are commonly eaten. Dried, toasted, and hulled seeds of other gourds and squashes are used as well. You can substitute shelled pumpkin seeds (*pepitas*) available from Hispanic stores. Toast the seeds by placing in a cookie sheet for 15 minutes in a moderate oven, or dry fry (without oil) in a frying pan. These *mbika* packets, like *liboké*, are usually cooked wrapped in banana leaves.

1 pound stewing meat, chopped or diced
1 onion, chopped
2 chili peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 cup *mbika*, shells removed (or substitute pumpkin seeds), briefly toasted
1 bouillon cube, crushed
salt and pepper to taste

1 TBS palm oil
water, as needed
4 aluminum foil sheets for wrapping, 10 × 10 inches

Brown meat, onion, and chili in an oiled skillet until the meat is well browned.
Combine *mbika*, bouillon, salt, pepper, and oil in a food processor or blender and grind to a thick paste, adding a bit of water if needed.
Add water as necessary until a thick paste is obtained.
Combine the paste and cooked meat mixture.
Place one-fourth of the meat mixture in foil and fold over to completely enclose the meat at least three times, to look somewhat like a burrito.
Cook the packets over an outdoor grill over medium heat, or in an oven. Turn after 15 minutes, if using a grill.
Check if cooked after 30 minutes.
Serve with *bâton de manioc* or *fufu*.

Mushroom and Lemon Sauce
(Sauce aux Champignons et Citron)

This is usually made from forest mushrooms collected in the wild. Oyster or *shiitake* mushrooms may be substituted.

4 TBS vegetable oil (or mix 2 TBS each oil and clarified butter for richer flavor)
1 pound mushrooms, cleaned and chopped
juice of 1 lemon
salt, pepper to taste

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat.
Add mushrooms and stir-fry until they are tender.
Add lemon juice and seasoning. Reduce heat and simmer.
Serve over rice, *bâton de manioc*, or *fufu*.

Wild Spinach in Palm Oil and Peanuts
(Fumbwa Elambanina Mafutaya Nguba)

Fumbwa (*Gnetum africanum*; also called *koko*) is an edible green found wild throughout tropical Africa. It is available in some African grocery stores and elsewhere, fresh, dried, or canned.

2 pounds *fumbwa* (substitute spinach, collards, kale), cleaned, hard stems removed, shredded
water to cover
1 cup peanuts, ground fine (or ½ cup natural peanut butter)

(*continued*)

2 ripe tomatoes, peeled and chopped (or equivalent canned crushed tomato)
1 onion, chopped fine
1 piece (about 4 ounces) dried, salted, or smoked fish, deboned and cleaned, soaked in water, and rinsed (*bacalau* or smoked mackerel is a good substitute), shredded
2 TBS red palm oil

If using *fumbwa*: parboil, uncovered, in plenty of water until tender.
If using fresh spinach, parboil 5 minutes; collards or kale, about 10 minutes.
In a saucepan, place the parboiled greens and 1 cup parboiling liquid; add tomatoes, onion, and dried fish.
Simmer for 5 minutes.
Take another cup of the parboiling liquid; combine with ground peanuts or peanut butter to a smooth paste.
Stir the peanut paste and palm oil into the greens, and simmer gently for 5 minutes, or until heated through.
Serve with *fufu* or *bâton de manioc*.

Green Papaya Jam

This preserve is often used to top a snack of fried bread or cassava roll.

3 cups sugar
3 cups water
3 cups green papaya, peeled and grated
½ tsp vanilla
juice of 1 lemon

Heat sugar and water for about 5 minutes for a light syrup.
Add papaya and simmer until thickened, about 30 minutes.
Remove from heat and stir in vanilla and lemon juice.
Pour into sterilized jars and seal.
Serve with bread or as snack topping.

CONGO, REPUBLIC OF (CONGO BRAZZAVILLE)

One of two neighboring central African countries with the same name, Congo is situated north of the Congo River (the other, the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, is to the south). It is a former French colony. The climate is tropical. Most of the northeast, away from the capital Brazzaville, is rural, and people live on subsistence farming. Farms raise manioc, peanuts, and yams, as well as a few animals for meat. Fish are highly prized, and there are some attempts to raise them commercially in ponds.

The population comprises numerous ethnic groups speaking a variety of languages. The cuisine is influenced by French elements but remains essentially central African.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: millet, sorghum, manioc, maize, and bananas, though they vary from place to place.
- Meat consumption varies. Domestic meats—goat and beef—are available in the cities. In the countryside, bush meat (wild animals) is consumed avidly.
- Greens, including the leaves of cassava and various forest greens and mushrooms, are a mainstay of the diet.
- Most tropical fruits and vegetables grow well in the Congo.

Typical Dishes

- Stews are eaten along with the local staple.
- Fish cooked in stews or baked in banana-leaf packets.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are eaten when possible.
- Traditional and rural families eat together on a mat on the floor, around a shared pot of staple with as many side dishes as can be afforded.
- Breakfast usually consists of porridge or, in the cities, baked goods.

- The midday meal and the evening meal can be more substantial, though for many the midday meal is little more than a snack.
- Snacks include fried plantains and sweet potatoes or peanuts sold by street vendors at most hours.
- Drinks include both homemade and commercial beers, various sodas, and fruit juices.

Cassava Leaves (Saka-Saka)

Saka-Saka (also *mpondu*) is the local word for cassava leaves.

2 pounds cassava greens (or substitute kale, collards, turnip greens, or spinach), stems removed, cleaned, and cut or torn into pieces
boiling water, as needed
3 TBS palm oil or *moambé* sauce (or substitute other vegetable oil)
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 green or red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 eggplant, peeled, cubed, rinsed, and salted
salt or baking soda, to taste
1 piece (about 3 ounces) dried, salted, or smoked fish (or 1 can anchovies)

Puree the greens in a mortar and pestle, blender, or food processor, adding water as needed to facilitate processing.
Place greens in a saucepan, add boiling water to cover, and cook, uncovered, until tender, for about 5 minutes for spinach, 10 for kale, and longer for cassava leaves.
Add all the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer. Do not stir.
Simmer until water is mostly gone and the greens are cooked to a pulp.
Serve as a side dish with a chicken, meat, or fish main course and with *bâton de manioc* or rice.

Cassava Leaves and Beans (Saka Madesu)

This dish is popular in the lower Congo River region, around the capital.

1 pound dried white beans (or 4 cups canned)
1 pound cassava greens (or substitute kale, collards, turnip greens, or spinach), stems removed, cleaned, rinsed, and cut or torn into shreds, then crushed in a mortar and pestle (or food processor)
5 TBS palm oil (or substitute any vegetable oil)
1 onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 small eggplant, chopped
salt, or baking soda, to taste

Soak the beans overnight in cold water. (Omit the following five steps if using canned beans.)
Drain, rinse, and drain again.
Cover the beans with cold water. Bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender.
Remove from heat and set aside.
Meanwhile, heat half of the oil in a skillet and fry the onion and green pepper for 5 minutes. Add eggplant.
Add this mixture to beans.
In a separate pot, boil greens for a few minutes with remaining oil and water to cover, then reduce heat and cook until greens are tender, stirring occasionally (cooking time varies depending on type of greens; cassava leaves may need up to 1 hour or more).
Combine beans and greens in a large pot. Season to taste.
Simmer over low heat for an additional 15–30 minutes.
Serve with *bâton de manioc*, rice, or boiled yam.

Fish and Kale (Mbisi Ye Kalou Na Loso)

The Congo River yields many kinds of fish. The most loved is the *capitaine* or Nile perch, which has firm white flesh.

3 TBS oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced into strips
¼ tsp black pepper
½ level tsp paprika
¾ pound spinach, kale or other greens, shredded
½ pint water
1 pound fish, cut into strips (any white-fleshed fish you prefer)
salt to taste

Heat oil. Add onion and bell pepper and sauté for 5 minutes.
Add black pepper, paprika, spinach, and water.
Cover and simmer for 5–10 minutes.
Add fish.
Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, or until fish is tender and flaky.
Serve as main course with yams or sweet potatoes.

Meat in Banana Leaf Wrapping (Liboké de Viande)

This is a Congolese variation on a common favorite of central and western Africa. It is eaten as a main dish.

2 cups peanuts, roasted, skinned, and crushed (or 1 cup natural peanut butter)
water, as needed
1 pound stewing beef, cut into large, bite-sized pieces
4 aluminum foil sheets (or banana leaves) for wrapping, 10 × 10 inches
salt and cayenne pepper to taste
2 onions, chopped
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped

Place the peanuts in a saucepan, add water to partially cover them, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer until tender, stirring often.
Add meat and continue to simmer until all the water is evaporated (30 minutes or so).
Sprinkle salt and pepper on the foil. (If using banana leaves, remove the central rib, warm up over a low flame or in a low oven to make them supple.)
Lay the meat and peanut mixture, onions, and chili pepper. Moisten with a bit of water.
Fold the foil over the mixture and wrap securely, sealing well. (Secure with kitchen twine or toothpicks if using banana leaves.)
Steam the wrapped packets on a rack over boiling water in a large, covered pot, or cook them on an outdoor grill or in an oven on medium heat. Turn them after 15 minutes.
After 30 minutes test one packet to check. If the meat is not tender, continue cooking.
Serve with *bâton de manioc* or *fufu*.

Fried Chicken with Peanut Butter Sauce

Chickens are commonly raised in house yards. Peanut sauce is common throughout Africa, as here, for a main dish.

2 TBS oil
1 chicken, cut into serving pieces
6 ounces tomato paste
½ pint water
1½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
2 ounces shelled peanuts, crushed into paste (or ¼ cup natural peanut butter)

Heat oil in a heavy pan and quickly brown chicken pieces.
Add tomato paste, water, salt, and pepper.
Stir in peanut paste, mixing well until thoroughly incorporated.
Simmer for 30–40 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until chicken is tender.

COOK ISLANDS

This is a nation of 15 islands in the heart of the South Pacific, between Tonga to the west and the Society Islands to the east, spread over an area the size of India, with a population of 14,000. There are two main island groups; one in the south, composed of some tall volcanic islands, and the other in the north, comprising 6 true atolls. The climate is tropical, tempered by cooling winds.

The population is Polynesian and speaks a Polynesian language unique to the islands. Traditional cooking was simple, based on staples such as breadfruit or taro, and locally caught fish baked or cooked over open fires. Contemporary cooking is much influenced by Western imported foods (mostly canned) and ways of cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Coconuts, sweet potatoes, breadfruit, taro, pork, and fish and seafood are the basis of the cuisine.
- Papaya, bananas, limes, and some other tropical fruit are also consumed in large quantities.
- Onions were introduced to the islands by Europeans.
- *Renga* (turmeric) may be local or may have been introduced by traders and is now used in many dishes. Salt is produced by evaporation from seawater. As a result, Cook Islands' dishes tend to be bland, the flavor produced by natural flavors and fermentation.
- Canned fish, onions, and canned corned beef ("bully beef") have also become firm favorites.
- Taro, both the corm and the leaves, are eaten, sometimes as a form of *poi*, sometimes cooked whole. The leaves serve as a sauce.

Typical Dishes

- Raw fish marinated in lime juice, dressed with coconut milk (*ika mata*).
- Seafood dishes: curried octopus; crab fermented in coconut milk.
- Steamed, boiled or baked (in an underground oven) taro roots, bananas or sweet potatoes.
- Papaya in savory and sweet dishes: baked whole papaya stuffed with rice and seafood or chicken; papaya slices in curry mayonnaise; papaya pudding (*poke*).

TARO

- Pudding (*poke*) made of mango, banana, or pumpkin.
- Breadfruit or taro slices in coconut milk wrapped in taro leaves and baked in an underground oven.
- Festive foods (seafood, fish, pork, chicken, root, and other vegetables or fruit) are usually wrapped with coconut milk in taro leaf parcels and baked for several hours in an underground oven. (Men take charge of festive cooking.)

Styles of Eating

- In most households, modified European dining is common, though it depends to a large extent on the occasion. In more traditional feasts, people eat with their hands from a spread leaf plate.
- Breakfast consists of fruit or cooked starch (taro or bananas).
- Lunch and dinner tend to be more substantial, consisting of several dishes, usually a starchy dish, together with fresh, baked, or fermented fish.

Breakfast Papaya

Papaya, which grow to a large size and are very sweet, often serve as a breakfast dish.

1 large ripe papaya
juice of 1 lime
1 cup fresh tender grated coconut

Cut papaya in half, lengthwise.
Scrape out seeds (these can be discarded, though in the Cook Islands they are crushed and used as a seasoning).
Sprinkle with lime juice.
Fill the cavity with the coconut.
Serve for breakfast, scooping out flesh and coconut with a spoon.

Fermented Fish Relish (Mitiore)

Fermented shellfish are used to extend the food supply and are eaten as a relish or sauce with yams or bananas.

2 cups fresh small crabs
1 fresh coconut, grated
2 cups cooked shellfish (clams, mussels, or your choice), diced
1 onion, finely diced

Place crabs in a muslin cloth and mash with a kitchen mallet, taking care to reserve the juices.
Place grated coconut in a bowl.
Squeeze crabs onto coconut, extracting as much juice as possible. Mix well. Discard shells.
Cover and leave overnight, refrigerated.
Add diced shellfish and onion.
Allow to stand for 1 more hour for flavors to penetrate.
Serve as appetizer.

Banana Poke

Serve this as an accompaniment to meat dishes. *Poke* (pronounced *po-kay*) is a pudding made of cassava mixed with one or two fruits or sweet vegetables, such as banana, papaya, mango, or pumpkin. Although the common banana at supermarkets, the Cavendish, can be used for *poke*, try to get some of the sweeter, thin-skinned Southeast Asian varieties, if possible.

4 over-ripe bananas (the riper the better, so bruised bananas are fine), peeled and roughly chopped
water to cover
2 cups cassava flour
2 cups coconut milk

Place bananas with water to cover in a pot and simmer for 30 minutes to 1 hour until pulped and completely soft (color will change to pink or purple).
Leave to cool thoroughly (the pulp can be frozen for use another day).
Combine cassava flour with 1 cup banana pulp. Mix well with your hands and knead to a solid mass that comes away from your hands and the side of the bowl. (Or mix in a food processor.)
Place in a greased 8 × 10 inch baking dish and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
Check after 30 minutes with a toothpick. If it comes away clean, it is ready. The texture should be dry but wobbly.
Warm coconut milk until almost bubbling.
Drop spoonfuls of the baked mixture into hot coconut milk.
Serve warm with roast or baked pork or fish.

Marinated Flying Fish (Ika Mata)

Fish are a central part of the diet, and this *ceviche*-style fish is cooked by the action of acid and salt. It is eaten for any meal.

1 pound fresh flying fish, deboned fillet (or substitute any absolutely fresh white-fleshed sea fish)
juice of 1 lime
salt

Place fillets in a serving dish.
Score the flesh lightly.
Pour lime juice over fillets, then rub with salt. Turn over and repeat the process for the other side.
Set aside for 2–4 hours, refrigerated. When done, the flesh will be white. Do not over-marinate.
Serve with coconut milk and baked taro, sweet potato, breadfruit, or boiled green bananas.

Breadfruit Stew (Tiopu Kuru)

Breadfruit is a fruit native to the Pacific Islands, the size of a large cantaloupe with a rough, thick skin covered in hexagonal disks. Breadfruit when cooked is bland and starchy, tasting of potatoes or bread to its first European tasters, hence its name. It can be boiled, steamed, or baked and has served as a source of food for Polynesian islanders for centuries.

1 firm ripe breadfruit (available from many Asian stores), peeled, rinsed, and diced into bite-size pieces
2 quarts salted water
1 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, minced fine
1 pound cooked pork or chicken, diced
2 cups chicken stock
2 cups coconut milk

Bring breadfruit to a boil in salted water to cover. Simmer over low heat for 15 minutes, making sure it does not dry out (add water if necessary).
Meanwhile, heat oil and sauté onion till translucent.
Add meat and chicken stock to onions.
Add this mixture to breadfruit and stir in before breadfruit chunks disintegrate.
Add coconut milk. Heat thoroughly but do not boil.
Serve hot.

Cooked Taro Leaves (Rukau)

Cooked taro leaves were one of the major traditional sources of greens in the Cook Islands, now supplemented by many imported tastes and foodstuffs.

2 pounds taro leaves, central rib cut out (substitute cabbage, Chinese cabbage, or other greens), shredded
1 cup coconut milk
1 large onion, minced fine
salt to taste
4 sheets of aluminum foil, 12 × 12 inches

Divide taro leaves into four portions.
Place portions in the middle of the foil sheet.
Mix coconut milk with salt and onion.
Pour one-fourth of the coconut mixture over the taro, ensuring it does not drip off.
Fold the foil to wrap the taro and coconut mixture. Ensure that the ends are sealed well.
Place the wrapped packets in a baking dish.
Bake in an earth (underground) oven (or a preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes or more).
Test for doneness by removing a bundle to check if leaves are tender.
Serve hot with extra coconut milk and cooked root vegetables of your choice.

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MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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COSTA RICA

A small Central American country just north of Panama, Costa Rica was a Spanish colony until independence in 1821. The climate is tropical, with a cooler spine of hills running down the center of the country, ideal for bananas and coffee (major exports), other fruits, vegetables, and beef. The Caribbean and Pacific coasts yield fish and seafood (which are mostly exported).

Most Costa Ricans are mixed descendants of Spanish and other European colonists. A small number are of Amerindian, Chinese, or African descent.

The cuisine combines Spanish, Caribbean, and Amerindian elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, beans, corn.
- Meat: chicken, beef, fish (sea bass, marlin, tuna, snapper), shellfish (shrimp, lobster, clams).
- Vegetables: cabbage, squash, cassava, pumpkin, *chayote* (a pear-shaped gourd also known elsewhere as christophene), taro, hearts of palm, plantain, avocado.
- Fruits: bananas, pineapple, guava, other tropical fruit such as *pejibaye* nut, cashew fruit, *mamones* (known as *guineps* throughout the Caribbean).
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, bay leaf, black pepper, thyme, rosemary, paprika, coriander, cloves, cumin, nutmeg, annatto seeds, salsa Lizano (otherwise known as Worcestershire sauce).

Typical Dishes

- The national dish is *gallo pinto* (lit. "spotted rooster"): rice and black beans, usually eaten with cabbage salad, fried plantains, and meat or chicken. Avocado or egg may be included.
- Spanish-style rice-based dishes with chicken or fish, stews and soups.
- *Olla de carne*: a stew of meat, squash, corn, cassava, potatoes, and *chayote* (christophene).
- Salad with heart of palm (*palmitos*).
- *Sopa negra*: puree of beans with hard-boiled egg and vegetables.
- South American-influenced seafood or fish salad—sea bass, shrimps, or clams—marinated in lemon, onion, garlic, and red bell peppers.

- Corn-based dishes such as pancakes (*chorreados*) served with sour cream; steamed pastries (*tamales*) with meat usually served at Christmas; corn bread; corn pudding.
- Spanish-style pastries filled with cheese, chicken, beans, potatoes or meat (*empanadas*, *arreglados*, *enchiladas*).
- Milk-based sweets.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day plus snacks.
- Breakfast is usually rice and beans, with eggs cooked to taste, with corn tortillas and sour cream.
- Lunch can be rice and beans, with chicken or meat in a sauce, accompanied by salad, fried plantain or mashed potato. This combination is called *casado* (married), and is served throughout the country.
- Dinner may be a soup, stew, or rice-based dish. Dessert is usually a milk-based sweet such as a cream custard or preserved fruit.
- Snacks are assorted stuffed pastries filled with cheese, meat, or chicken (*empanadas* or *arreglados*) or cornmeal tortillas with chicken and vegetables, accompanied by sweet drinks, such as sugar-cane juice or milkshakes, or coffee.
- Beverages: coffee; juices called *refrescos* of tamarind, guava, pineapple, papaya, coconut; milk shakes made with toasted cereal grains (*pinolillo, horchata*); sugar-cane juice or cane syrup and water (*agua refresca*).

Rice and Beans (Gallo Pinto)

This variation of the national dish comes from Limon province. Rice and beans is a dish eaten at least once a day, if not more: at breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Some "Ticans," as the Costa Ricans refer to themselves, eat this at every meal. Stewed or fried chicken, a salad, and fried plantain are the usual accompaniments, for which recipes also follow.

4 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped fine
5 stalks thyme (1½ TBS, dried)
5 cloves garlic
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and roughly chopped
2 cups rice, washed and drained
1 8-ounce can black beans, drained
1 whole hot red pepper (optional)
2 TBS paprika
2 cups coconut milk
1½ cups water

In a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot, heat vegetable oil over medium heat.
Sauté the onion, thyme, garlic, and peppers, until softened.
Stir in rice, beans, hot pepper (if using), paprika, coconut milk, and water.
Bring to a boil, cover and simmer over low heat until rice is done, about 20–25 minutes.
To serve, heap on individual plates. Place a piece of chicken (see recipe "Coconut Chicken") beside rice. Surround with cabbage salad and fried plantain (recipes follow).

Potato Slices (Gallitos de Papa)

This is a typical side dish for a midday or evening family meal, or, more commonly, a snack served on or with corn tortillas.

3 TBS vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 potatoes, diced
½ tsp salt
½ tsp sugar
1 tsp paprika
4 corn tortillas
2 tsp chopped cilantro
1 cup sour cream (optional)

In a skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Stir in the finely chopped garlic and sauté until light brown.
Add potatoes, salt, sugar, and paprika.
Cover the pan and cook at low heat for about 20 minutes until the potatoes are tender. Add a little water as needed to keep the potatoes from sticking.
To serve: warm the corn tortillas in a low oven (200°F) for 5–7 minutes.
Place the potatoes on individual plates next to a tortilla. Garnish with cilantro and a spoonful of sour cream.

Coconut Chicken (Pollo en Coco)

Pork or other meat as well as fish can be used instead of chicken for this dish (with the name changed accordingly), as an accompaniment to rice and beans. It is served for a midday or evening meal.

4 large chicken pieces, quarters or legs
3 TBS oil
4 TBS sugar
2 8-ounce cans coconut milk
2 cups chicken broth or water

Marinade

peel from 2 limes, grated
juice from 2 limes
¼ cup tomato juice
1 TBS fresh cilantro, chopped, or 1 TBS fresh parsley, chopped
1 tsp oil
¼ tsp salt
⅛ tsp red pepper sauce (optional)
2 cloves garlic, minced

In a shallow, nonmetallic dish, mix marinade and liberally coat chicken pieces. Let chicken marinate for 8 hours or overnight, turning occasionally.
Drain chicken, reserve marinade.
In a skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Stir in the sugar, and when dark brown, add chicken pieces one at a time, coating each in dark caramel.
Transfer chicken to a stewing pot; stir in coconut milk, marinade, and broth.

(*continued*)

Bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until gravy is thickened and chicken is tender, about 35–45 minutes.
Stir occasionally and check that the gravy is not sticking to the pot. Keep warm until ready to serve.

Cabbage, Cucumber, and Tomato Salad (Ensalada)

This dish is eaten as an appetizer for most main meals.

½ small cabbage, chopped
1 cucumber, cubed
3 tomatoes, cubed
2 limes
2 TBS cilantro, chopped
salt, pepper to taste

Squeeze the juice of two limes, mix with cilantro, salt, and pepper to taste. Stir into prepared vegetables and mix well.

Fried Plantain (Patacones)

These are the equivalent of French fries, eaten as an accompaniment to rice and beans or other main dish, or on their own as a snack.

2 ripe plantains (skins must be black or almost black)
oil for frying
salt, pepper to taste

Peel plantains and cut diagonally into ⅛-inch slices.
In a frying pan, heat over medium heat enough oil to shallow fry the plantains (about ⅛ inch depth).
Fry the plantain slices a few at a time until golden brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil. Sprinkle salt and pepper over plantains just before serving.

Corn Cake (Pastel de Maíz)

This simple cake is a very popular dessert that makes use of plentiful and popular corn.

1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 cup flour
1 cup frozen corn kernels, defrosted and drained

Preheat the oven to 375°F.
Cream the butter and sugar until light. Mix in well the eggs, one at a time.
Beat in flour, then corn.
Put into a greased and floured 9×13-inch baking pan.
Bake for 30 minutes or until cake tests done.

COTE D'IVOIRE

Cote d'Ivoire is a West African country, a former colony of France. It was a stable and relatively prosperous country for years until a civil war erupted in the 1990s. The country prides itself on its French heritage. Much of the country is covered by forests, except inland where it is mostly savannah. The climate is tropical, and cassava, maize, other staples, fruit and vegetables are raised. Fishing is prominent along the coast.

The population is composed of a number of ethnic groups, some of which sprawl over the borders with neighboring countries.

The traditional diet in Cote d'Ivoire is very similar to that of neighboring countries in its reliance on grains and tubers. The cooking centers on staples such as cassava or sorghum, eaten with peanut- or vegetable-based sauces, with or without meat or fish.

Foodstuffs

- Cassava is the main staple. Sorghum is sometimes eaten further inland.
- Sweet potatoes, maize, and beans are used to make side dishes.
- A variety of small fish are eaten smoked or fresh (near the coast).
- Chicken and beef are desired meats, though outside the reach of many Ivorians.
- Many kinds of tropical fruits are raised, including pineapples, which are exported. Bananas and plantains, both sweet and nonsweet varieties, avocados, and many other fruit and vegetables are eaten.

Typical Dishes

- *Kedjenou*: chicken made with vegetables in a mild sauce.
- *Attiéké* (grated cassava) is a popular side dish.
- *Aloco*—ripe bananas in palm oil, spiced with steamed onions and chili and eaten alone or with grilled fish—are a popular street food.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day plus snacks in the countryside. Three meals a day plus snacks in the towns and among the wealthy.

- Breakfast: cassava or maize porridge; rolls and coffee among urban dwellers.
- Lunch: a light snack for many, often some fried plantains, fruit, tea or coffee; a dish of stiff porridge, or *bâton de manioc* with sauce such as peanut sauce.
- Supper: a main meal of *bâton de manioc* or *attiéké*, accompanied by side dishes of stews made of greens and other vegetables, and perhaps including fish, meat, or other sources of protein.
- Snacks: peanut or sweet potato fritters, fruits.
- Open-air restaurants called *maquis* are popular places to socialize and eat in company. *Maquis* often serve braised chicken, fish cooked in onions and tomatoes, served with *attiéké*.

Abidjan-Style Avocado Soup (Soupe d'Avocat Abidjanaise)

Avocados—softball sized green or black skinned, with soft yellow flesh—are commonly found throughout Africa. This dish owes a great deal to French influence, and is more of a restaurant dish than a common household recipe. Ivorians eat out a great deal, and this soup is in great demand.

2 very ripe avocados, skin and pit removed
6 cups (or more) cold chicken or vegetable stock
juice from 2 limes
¼ cup plain yogurt
2–3 drops (or more) chili sauce (Tabasco or similar)
salt, black pepper to taste
4 slices of lime to garnish

In a blender or food processor, put avocado, stock, lime juice, yogurt, chili sauce, and seasoning, and puree until smooth. Add a bit more stock if the consistency is too thick.

Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

When ready to serve, spoon into bowls, garnish with a lime slice, and sprinkle a bit of chili sauce, if desired, over each portion.

Fried Chicken with Peanut Butter Sauce (Poulet à la N'gatietro)

This is a side dish for the main meal, often available in roadside restaurants.

1 chicken (about 2 pounds), cut up into large portions
3 TBS cooking oil
1 onion, chopped
3 green onions, sliced
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 TBS tomato paste
salt to taste
1 tsp paprika
1 bay leaf
¾ pint water
1 cup natural unsweetened peanut butter

(*continued*)

Brown chicken in hot oil in a heavy saucepan.
Add onions, tomatoes, tomato paste, salt, paprika, and bay leaf.
Cover and cook over low heat for 5–10 minutes.
Add water and simmer until chicken is nearly tender, about 20–25 minutes. Remove from heat.
Cream peanut butter in a mixing bowl and add enough of the hot chicken stock to make a light, creamy, smooth sauce.
Add sauce to pan and stir well.
Cover and cook over low heat for about 10 minutes, or until chicken is done.
Serve with *attiéké*.

Chicken and Eggplant (Kedjenou)

Kedjenou is a popular dish in *maquis* (open-air restaurants) throughout Cote d'Ivoire. This is usually cooked in a wide-mouthed earthenware jar, called *canari*, over coals.

4 large chicken portions (quarters, breasts, or legs)
1 large eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 large onions, chopped
1 fresh red or green chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
2 cups fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
2 TBS fresh ginger root, grated
1 bay leaf
salt to taste

Place all ingredients in an oven-proof, sealable casserole with a well-fitted lid, and mix thoroughly.
Seal the casserole with aluminum foil to be air-tight.
Place the casserole in the middle of a moderate oven (350°F) and bake for about 1 hour and a half.
Do not open the oven or the casserole during cooking.
Serve with yams, *bâton de manioc*, or rice.

Cassava and Plantain Mash (Foutou)

This is one form of staple carbohydrate food that mixes two of the major sources of food in the country: cassava and plantains.

2½ cups of manioc (also called cassava, yucca, or yuca), peeled and cut into large chunks
5 plantains (or substitute green bananas), peeled
water
salt to taste

Boil manioc and plantains with water to cover in a large covered pan, about 20–25 minutes or until very soft. Drain, reserving the liquid.
In a food processor, blend the plantains, manioc, and salt to a thick puree or paste, of similar consistency to mashed potato. If needed, add a little water from the pot.
Roll into plum-sized balls, and serve with a vegetable, peanut, meat, or fish sauce.

Fish and Fufu (Sauce Claire et Fufu)

This is a coastal dish eaten for the evening meal.

1 large eggplant, cubed
1 whole fish, scaled and gutted, cut into 4 portions
1 onion, chopped
2 hot chili peppers, whole
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes, drained
½ pound okra, stems removed, whole or chopped (see note)
salt to taste
1 bouillon cube, crushed
4 plantains, peeled and sliced into 2-inch pieces
1 cup red palm or other vegetable oil

Place all the ingredients in the order given in a saucepan with 1 tablespoon palm oil. Add water to come to an inch under the plantains.
Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, about 20–25 minutes, or until plantains are tender.
Remove the plantains, and puree in a food processor with the remaining palm oil to make *fufu*.
Taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning. Gently reheat the sauce if necessary.
Place *fufu* in individual serving plates, and ladle hot sauce and fish on top.
Note: The smaller the okra pieces, the more glutinous the stew.

Yams with Tomatoes

Several varieties of yams (true yams, not sweet potatoes; sold as *ñame* in Latin American specialty groceries, also as *yamaimo* in Japanese specialty groceries) are eaten as side dishes or as snacks.

½ cup palm or other oil
2 onions, cut into rings
2 TBS tomato paste
1½ pounds yam, peeled and cubed
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into strips
water to cover
salt to taste

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a saucepan, and sauté onions until softened.
Stir in tomato paste and sauté another 2 minutes.
Add yams, peppers, water, and salt.
Simmer for 20–25 minutes, or until yams are soft. Adjust seasoning.
Serve yams on their own or with a meat dish.

Fried Plantains (Aloko)

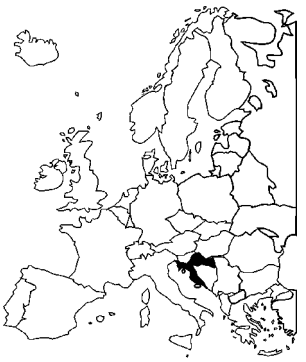
Fried plantains are a common street snack that are also eaten as a side dish, most commonly with fried fish.

4 plantains (or green bananas), peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces

oil for deep-frying

Heat the oil in a deep-frying pot.
Fry banana pieces, a few at a time, until reddish-brown.
Remove and drain on paper towels.
Serve immediately.

CROATIA



Croatia is a relatively newly independent Balkan country on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, slightly smaller than West Virginia. The country is largely mountainous bisected by some wide plains, and much of it is forested. It has a long coastline with many sheltered bays, and fish and seafood are common. The climate is cool, cold in winter, except for along the coast where the winter is mild.

Croatia was a part of the Ottoman empire, and later of the Austro-Hungarian empire, then a part of Yugoslavia.

The food is generally Balkan, heavily influenced by Turkish cooking and names, and by Austro-Hungarian foods.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are a mix of potatoes and flour dishes and rice. People eat a variety of breads (bread is almost always on the table).
- Pork and lamb are favorite meats.
- Fish and seafood are great favorites along the coast.
- Fruit, particularly soft fruit such as plums, apricots, and grapes are eaten and go to making wine and liquors.
- Various vegetables are prepared for stews, relishes, and pickles, which accompany most meals.

Typical Dishes

- Pancakes filled with both savory and sweet fillings.
- Hearty vegetable soups and stews, particularly in the winter.
- Bell pepper or eggplant relishes (*ajvar*).
- Roast meats, particularly pork.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day plus snacks are usually eaten.
- Place settings are European standard.

- Breakfast: bread and jam with coffee, or stuffed pancakes.
- Lunch: the heavy meal of the day, usually several courses including a salad, soup, main dish of meat or fish, and a sweet, very often washed down by wine for all.
- Dinner: a light meal of pancakes, bread with vegetable dips, or similar to breakfast.
- Snacks: served with coffee; may be sweet or savory.

Pancakes with Cottage Cheese
(Palacinke sa Sirom)

Pancakes are eaten either for breakfast or the evening meal.

¾ cup flour
½ cup milk mixed with ¼ cup water
2 large eggs, beaten
pinch salt
½ cup sour cream
2 TBS sugar
3–4 TBS oil

Filling

½ cup cottage cheese (drained)
½ cup sour cream
1 egg
2 TBS sugar
1 TBS raisins
grated rind from ½ lemon

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Place the flour in a bowl, make a well in the center, and swiftly mix in the milk and water, 1 egg, and salt. Do not overbeat; batter can have lumps.
Mix all ingredients of filling together and set aside.
Slowly heat a 5-inch heavy frying pan over medium heat.
Pour about ¼ cup batter, swirling the batter to spread evenly.
Cook until just set and slightly colored on the bottom, then turn over to cook the other side. The pancakes do not need to brown.
Repeat with the remaining batter.
Place cooked pancake on a plate.
Spread filling, roll up, and place seam side down in an 8 × 12-inch baking pan.
Repeat with the rest of the pancakes.
Mix remaining beaten egg, sour cream and sugar, and pour over the rolled pancakes.
Bake 25 minutes at 350°F until sour cream is bubbling and flecked golden brown.
Serve hot with coffee.

Eggplant Dip (Ajvar)

Eaten with most meals as an appetizer, *ajvar* is usually scooped out with flat bread.

1 large eggplant, pricked several times with a fork
3 bell peppers, red, yellow, or green
1 clove garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
juice of ½ lemon
¼ cup olive oil
3 TBS parsley, minced

Grill or roast (at 400°F) eggplants and bell peppers at high heat, turning them to char evenly all over.
Let cool, and peel off skin from the peppers. Remove cores and scrape out all the seeds.
Slit the eggplants at midpoint, and scoop out all flesh with a spoon. Discard stem and skin.
In a food processor, roughly puree the vegetables together with garlic, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and oil (the result should not be too smooth).
Season, and stir in the lemon juice.
Gradually stir in as much of the oil as the vegetables will absorb.
Mix well.
Mound on a serving bowl and garnish with parsley.

Potato Soup Zagorje Style (Zagorska Juha od Krumpira)

This thick soup is eaten at midday, usually in cold weather.

2 TBS butter
3 strips smoked bacon, diced
1 onion, chopped
1 tsp sweet paprika
1½ pounds potato, peeled and cubed
1 sprig marjoram
1 bay leaf
1 TBS flour
2 pints (or more) water
1 cup sour cream
3 TBS parsley, minced
2 cloves garlic, mincedsalt, pepper, vinegar to taste

Heat butter in a thick pot and sauté the bacon and onion until softened.
Stir in paprika, potatoes, marjoram, bay leaf, salt, pepper, and flour.
Add water to cover by 1 inch.
Simmer gently until potatoes are soft, about 30 minutes.
Let cool for 10 minutes, then puree in a food processor until smooth.
Return to pot and heat.
Stir in sour cream, parsley, garlic, and vinegar to taste.
Serve piping hot.

Cod Fish Salad (Bakalar)

This is traditionally served on Christmas Eve.

2 pounds dried salted cod
6 medium potatoes, boiled, skinned, and cubed
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
extra virgin olive oil

The day before, rinse cod and soak in cold water overnight, changing the water at least twice.
Simmer in water to cover until soft.
Flake, removing all bones and skin, and place in a bowl.
Add potatoes, garlic, seasoning, and oil.
Toss to coat evenly.
Serve warm.

Dalmatian Fritters (Franjki; Krostule; Hrostule; Krustule)

The Dalmatian area is the coast of Croatia. *Krostule* are eaten either for dessert or as a snack.

1 cup flour
3 egg yolks
pinch of salt
1 TBS sugar
1 TBS sour cream
a few drops rum flavoring
vanilla sugar to taste
oil for deep-frying

Place flour, egg yolks, salt, sugar, sour cream, and rum flavor in a food processor, and mix just until it forms a dough.
Remove and knead until smooth and elastic. Cover and set aside for 30 minutes.
Roll out the pastry $\frac{1}{8}$-inch thick.
Cut into strips with a fluted pastry-cutter.
Heat oil to moderate heat, and fry fritters a few at a time.
Remove, and drain on paper towels.
Sprinkle with vanilla sugar while still hot.
Serve immediately.

CUBA

Cuba, the largest island country in the Caribbean, was a Spanish colony until independence in 1898. It is one of a few remaining Communist countries. Its tropical climate and varied terrain are ideal for cultivating sugarcane, citrus fruits, and coffee (its major exports), and raising livestock for meat. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba's main trading partner, the Cuban export economy has suffered, and there is widespread shortage of many food items.

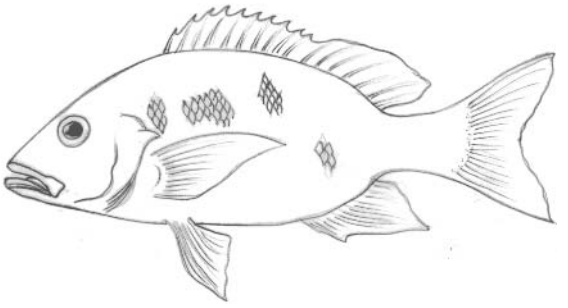
Cubans are mostly mixed European descendants of colonists or African plantation workers. Traditional Cuban food is called *comida criolla* (Creole cooking) and is Spanish-style with African and Caribbean influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, cassava, potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn are the traditional staples, often mixed together. (Shortages affect availability of most food items.)
- Meat: pork, chicken, eggs, beef, goat, wild game.
- Fish: tuna, red snapper, swordfish; seafood: spiny lobster, shrimp.
- Vegetables: beans, tomatoes, lettuce, squash, *chayote* (also called christophene elsewhere), taro plant leaves, beets, cabbage.
- Fruit: banana, orange, guava, papaya, other tropical fruits such as soursop (*guanabana*), custard apple, *zapote*.
- Seasoning: onion, garlic, thyme, oregano, bay leaf, black pepper, cumin, orange or other citrus juice, cinnamon, aniseed.

Typical Dishes

- Most typical dish: roast pork with rice and beans, served with boiled cassava or fried plantain and a garlic sauce (*mojo criollo*).
- Spanish-style stews and soups (e.g., *ajiaco, guisado*), roast meat, fried pork, or breaded chicken cutlets, and milk- and egg-rich sweets.
- Rice and bean dishes: *congrí* (rice and kidney beans), rice and black beans (*moros y cristianos*, "Moors and Christians").
- African-style *fufú* is made from boiled and mashed green bananas, sometimes served with crumbled crisp pork rind.
- Fresh vegetable salads feature tomato and cucumber with avocado, bell pepper, chayote, cabbage, beets, corn kernels.



RED SNAPPER

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast is light: bread roll with fried, boiled, or scrambled eggs and milky coffee.
- Lunch: light snacks, usually corn fritters, Spanish-style omelet (*tortilla*), pasta salad or pizza; or vegetable and meat stew with bread, rice, and toasted cornmeal; rice and beans or other rice-based meal.
- The main meal is eaten in the evening, usually 2–3 courses, of fried chicken or pork chop or cutlet, with rice and beans, fried plantain, boiled and mashed green banana or cassava, and a simple salad of tomatoes with cucumber or other fresh vegetable.
- Snacks (*bocaditos*) eaten at street stalls, bars, or bought off vendors: ham and cheese sandwiches, savory pastries; morsels of pork or chicken in garlic sauce, pizza, Spanish-style omelets, hot fried plantain chips (*mariquitas*), cinnamon and aniseed-flavored doughnuts.
- Common desserts are ripe local fruit; sweet guava or mango paste eaten with cheese; fried bananas; vanilla- or rum-flavored custard; sweet fritters (*churros*); ice cream flavored with local fruits, for example, guava, coconut, passion fruit.
- Beverages: coffee, sugar-cane juice, fresh tropical fruit (guava, mango) in juices or milkshakes. Cuban rum is world-famous and made into cocktails with lime juice (e.g., daiquiri and mojito).
- Restaurants, bars, and cafes serve a limited range of local food in the capital and major towns. Hotels catering to tourists serve a wider selection of foods. Some private houses serve home-cooked, full-course meals, payable only in U.S. currency.

Corn Soup (Sopa de Maíz)

Corn soup is usually eaten for dinner.

3 cups frozen corn kernels, defrosted and drained
4 cups chicken stock
1 cup light cream
salt, freshly ground white pepper
2 eggs
2 TBS chopped parsley

Puree corn in blender or food processor with the chicken stock.
Into a saucepan, pour puree and stir in cream.
Simmer over low heat, stirring from time to time, for 5–7 minutes.
Sieve the mixture, return it to the saucepan, season with salt and pepper, and continue simmering.
Add a bit of water if the soup becomes very thick.
In a small bowl, beat the eggs lightly and stir in ½ cup of soup.
Stir in the egg mixture into the soup pot, and keep stirring for 1 or 2 minutes.
To serve, garnish with chopped parsley.

Papaya, Pepper, and Avocado Salad (Ensalada Mixta)

Salads dressed with oil, vinegar, and salt usually accompany a meat-rich meal or rice and beans.

romaine lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
1 ripe papaya, cubed
1 large or 2 small, ripe avocados, cubed
½ small red onion, finely chopped

Dressing

3 TBS olive oil
juice of 2 fresh limes
salt to taste
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp ground cumin
1 TBS finely chopped cilantro

In a bowl, mix the dressing ingredients and toss in the vegetables and fruits. Chill until ready to serve.

Red Beans (Frijoles)

Beans and rice is the most popular meal combination and most Cubans eat it at least once a day, together with a meat or chicken dish. This is eaten for lunch or dinner.

3 TBS olive oil
3 strips bacon, diced
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 medium-sized green bell pepper, finely chopped
1 cup tomato sauce
1 TBS red wine vinegar
¼ tsp dried oregano
salt, freshly ground black pepper
1 14-ounce can kidney beans, drained
1 large green bell pepper, diced
1 bay leaf

Prepare the *sofrito*: in a stewing pot, heat oil over low heat. Stir in bacon, garlic, onion, and bell pepper. Cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring from time to time, until vegetables are soft. Stir in tomato sauce, vinegar, oregano, salt, and pepper, and cook until thickened, about 8–10 minutes.

Add the beans, green pepper, and bay leaf, and cook over medium heat for 30 minutes more until thick. Discard bay leaf and serve with white rice.

Pork Chops (Chuletas)

These pork chops, marinated in a characteristic garlic sauce (*mojo criollo*), are popular for the main evening meal. Accompaniments are rice and beans, fried plantain or fried green banana or fried sweet potatoes, and a vegetable salad.

8 center-cut pork chops, about 4 ounces each
salt, freshly ground black pepper to taste
4 cloves garlic
¼ tsp dried oregano
¼ tsp ground cumin
¼ cup orange juice
juice from one lime and one lemon
2 large onions, thinly sliced
¼ cup pure Spanish olive oil
½ cup dry sherry (optional)
3 TBS oil

Season the chops with salt and pepper.
Puree the garlic, oregano, and cumin with the citrus juices.
Put the chops in a nonreactive bowl, pour the spiced citrus juice over, and cover with the sliced onions. Cover and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours or overnight.
Remove the chops from the marinade; pat dry with paper towels. Reserve the marinade.
Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat and brown chops on both sides. Add the marinade, onions and sherry. Cover, and cook until chops are tender, about 15–20 minutes. Serve with beans and rice.

Lemon-Anise Flan (Flan de Limón)

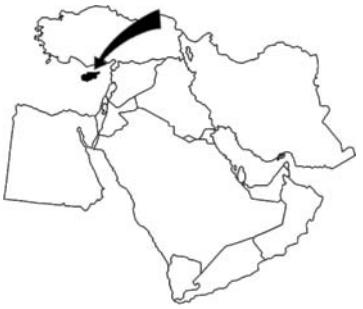
This is a rich and creamy Spanish-style custard, which is often served for dessert.

¼ cup sugar
¼ cup water
2 cups whole milk
1 tsp aniseed
1 cinnamon stick
grated rind of 1 lemon
2 eggs
4 large egg yolks
2 tsp vanilla extract
⅛ tsp salt
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk

Make caramel: in a small heavy saucepan over medium heat, stir sugar and water until sugar dissolves. Allow it to boil for about 10 minutes without stirring until syrup turns a deep amber color. Quickly pour caramel into a 2 quart baking dish or casserole. Immediately tilt the dish to evenly coat the bottom. Set aside.
Put whole milk, aniseed, cinnamon stick, and lemon rind in a medium saucepan. Simmer over low heat about 5 minutes. Cover and let stand to allow the flavors to infuse the milk, about 30 minutes.
Preheat oven to 350°F.
Mix well eggs and yolks, vanilla, salt, and condensed milk in a large bowl. Stir in the infused milk gradually, whisking well to blend. Strain the egg mixture into the prepared baking dish.
Set the baking dish into a tray in the middle of the oven.
Pour hot water into the tray, enough to come halfway up the sides of the baking dish.

Bake flan until center is gently set, about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
Take flan out of the oven and cool on a rack.
Cover and chill overnight.
To serve, run a knife around the edge of the flan to loosen.
Put a flat serving plate over the top of the baking dish.
Keeping one hand under the baking dish and the other hand over the serving plate, swiftly invert the baking dish over the serving plate (all the while keeping plate and dish together).
The flan should slip off easily into the serving plate. Lift off the baking dish.

CYPRUS



Cyprus is an island nation tucked into the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. Settled by a mixture of Greeks and Phoenician-related peoples in prehistory, the island was largely Greek until occupied by the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century. After World War I it became a British dominion until independence in the 1960s.

Rolling valleys and mountains with hot summers and mild winters make olives, wheat, other Mediterranean-type fruits and vegetables to flourish. Sheep are the most common livestock. Cheese and other milk products, fish from the sea, and wheat products are the basic food sources.

Its population is divided (in all senses) between Turkish (Muslim) and Greek (Christian) Cypriots. The food is heavily influenced by Greek and Turkish cultures with an additional flavor of the nearby Levant.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: bread, rice, noodles.
- Meat: mutton, fish, chicken, pork (not for Muslims), sausages, eggs, cheese, and other dairy products.
- Vegetables: particularly tomatoes, green beans, peppers, eggplant, zucchini, legumes. Pickled vegetables, olives.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, tomato, herbs (rosemary, sage, thyme, oregano, bay leaf, parsley), lemon, spices (cinnamon, pepper, coriander, etc.). Olive oil as cooking medium and condiment.

Typical Dishes

- *Kleftiko* (baked lamb) is the most popular festive dish.
- Meat dishes: grilled skewered lamb, pork, or chicken (*souvlakia*); pork stewed in wine and coriander; rabbit or beef stewed with wine vinegar and spices (*stiphado*).
- Seafood dishes: octopus or squid in red wine; grilled whole fish such as red mullet or sea bass.
- Vegetable dishes: braised eggplant; stuffed grape leaves; potatoes in olive oil and parsley; moussaka (eggplant and meat casserole); salad of seasonal vegetables

with feta cheese, olives and herbs; cucumber with mint-flavored yogurt (*talatouri*).
- Sweet pastries made with honey, syrup, and nuts: *pastellaki* (made of peanuts, sesame, and honey syrup); doughnuts in honey syrup (*loukoumades*). Triangular pastries stuffed with cracked wheat, pumpkin, and raisins (*kolokoti*) are a popular snack in cafes.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day, with snacks. The major meal usually eaten in the evening includes a meat dish and a sweet dessert.
- Forks, spoons and individual settings are the preferred way of eating, though very often pieces of flat bread are used to scoop up morsels, particularly those from meze.
- Families eat together when possible, particularly on feast days and Sundays (for Christians) or Fridays (for Muslims).
- Breakfast: eggs, pies, bread, cheese jam, coffee.
- Lunch: a *meze*, fish, salads, bread. Sometimes a soup.
- Main meals begin with *meze*: 3, 6, or 12 small dishes that serve as appetizers, including olives, beans, pickles, and small fish dishes eaten with *pide* (flat bread).
- Salads, both raw and cooked are very common with almost all meals.
- Pickles—olives and various vegetables in brine or vinegar—accompany most meals.
- Supper: a soup, salads, a meat main dish (which is usually served with the salads), potatoes or rice, or noodles. Fruit (fresh or preserved in syrup) or a sweet.
- Snacks: pastries are eaten during the day with thick coffee and a glass of water.
- Virtually all meals end with small cups of black, sweet coffee.
- Dining out is popular, and men tend to spend many hours at a local coffee shop, talking, drinking coffee, and eating pastry.

Chard Rice (Seskoulorizo)

Greens and rice are often served for lunch, or accompanying a meat dish in the evening.

8 large chard leaves, ribs and stems removed (substitute kale or collard greens)
4 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
3 cups rice, rinsed and drained
½ cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
2 TBS parsley, chopped
1 pint water
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
plain yogurt and crusty bread, to serve

Tear chard leaves into large pieces.
Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat.

(*continued*)

Add the onion and cook until softened.
Stir in all the other ingredients except chard.
Bring to a boil and stir in the chard.
Cover, lower heat, and simmer for 15–20 minutes until the rice is tender.
Remove from the heat and let stand, undisturbed for 5–10 minutes.
Fluff up the rice with a fork and place on individual plates.
Serve with yogurt and bread.

Stuffed Grape Leaves (Koupepia)

This dish is a Cypriot version of a Greek favorite.

3 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 pound ground meat, a mix of lamb, pork, or beef
½ cup red wine
1 cup rice
juice of 1 lemon
½ onion, chopped
¼ cup parsley, minced
¼ cup mint, minced
1 tomato, chopped
salt and pepper to taste
1 can or ¾ pound grape leaves (available from Middle Eastern or Greek stores) rinsed
½ cup hot water

Heat oil over medium heat and fry onion until softened. Stir in meat and cook until it changes color.
Stir in red wine and rice, and cook for 1–2 minutes.
Remove from heat, and transfer into a bowl.
Add lemon juice, more onion, parsley, mint, tomato, pepper, and salt. Mix thoroughly.
To wrap the leaves: on a cutting board or flat plate, lay a whole grape leaf, shiny side down, with its stem closest to you. (Snip off any remaining stems, and set aside any torn leaves for lining the cooking pan.)
Place a tablespoon of filling roughly in the middle of the leaf.
Fold over the stem edge, then the sides to enclose the stuffing, and roll firmly. Secure with toothpick if necessary.
Repeat with the remaining ingredients.
Line the base of a heavy pot with a few torn leaves.
Arrange the *koupepia* close together in layers. Add another layer of leaves on top (or substitute with cabbage leaves).
Pour in hot water and drizzle olive oil over all.
Place an inverted plate on the rolls to keep them from shifting during cooking.
Cover the pot tightly and cook gently over low heat for 30–45 minutes.
At the end of cooking, take one to test. If the rice is still not tender, cook a further 5–8 minutes, adding a little water to the pot if necessary.

Oven-Baked Lamb (Kleftiko)

Baked lamb is a favorite celebratory dish.

4 pounds of lamb with bone, cut into large pieces
4 bay leaves
2 cloves garlic
salt and pepper to taste

Place lamb in an ovenproof dish with a tight lid.
Sprinkle with salt and insert the bay leaves among the meat pieces.
Cook in a preheated moderate oven for 20 minutes.
Lower heat and cook for 1½ to 2 hours until meat is very tender and coming off the bone.
Serve over rice.

Fried Liver (Sikotaki Afelia)

This is a favorite appetizer or main dish.

½ cup flour
salt and black pepper to taste
1 pound liver (lamb or calf, or substitute chicken breast) cut in strips ½-inch thick by 2-inch wide
4 TBS vegetable oil
4 TBS red wine
2 TBS red wine vinegar
3 tsp crushed coriander seeds

Season the flour with salt and pepper.
Just before cooking, toss liver strips in flour to coat evenly.
Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
Swiftly fry each piece of meat for about 1 minute on each side until browned but still pink in the middle. Remove and drain on paper towels.
Stir in wine and vinegar to the pan and bring to a boil.
Return the meat to the pan and sprinkle with coriander.
Simmer just until meat is warmed through. (Overcooking will make the liver tough.)
Serve immediately with rice or fresh bread.

Cinnamon and Honey Fritters (Loukoumades)

This is a common snack available from street vendors.

2 cups flour
¼ tsp salt
¼ ounce dried yeast
1½ cups warm water

(*continued*)

½ tsp sugar
vegetable oil, for deep-frying
8 TBS warmed honey
2 tsp cinnamon

Sift the flour and salt into a bowl and stir in the yeast.
Gradually add warm water, stirring well. The mixture should be very thick.
Cover batter with a towel and leave in a warm place for 3 hours, or until doubled in size.
Heat the oil until very hot but not smoking.
Take a teaspoonful of dough and use the other to push the dough into the hot oil.
Cook only a few fritters at a time.
Fry until golden on both sides (about 1 minute).
Drain on paper towels.
Distribute fritters among 4 plates.
Pour a tablespoon of warmed honey on the side of each plate and sprinkle with cinnamon.
Eat warm, dunking each mouthful into the cinnamon honey.

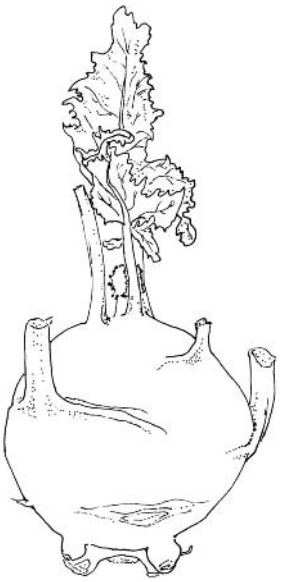
CZECH REPUBLIC

This is a landlocked central European country created by the mutually agreed-upon breakup of Czechoslovakia. The Czech area had been under the control of the Austro-Hungarian empire for centuries. It later was an independent country before becoming a part of the Soviet empire. It is sandwiched between Magyar, Germanic, and Slavic cultures, and its culture has influences from all three. The climate is continental, with hot summers and cold winters, hence wheat and potatoes, grapes and apricots are grown. Cows are raised for milk and other dairy products.

The population is largely Slavic. The cuisine is influenced by Austro-Hungarian cooking, by neighboring German influences, and by a Slavic heritage.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are wheat flour products and potatoes.
- Pork, beef, and carp are preferred meats.
- Vegetables include many of the cabbage family: cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi.
- Fruit, particularly plums and apricots are grown, as well as grapes for consumption and wine.
- Dairy products, including milk, cheeses, butter, and sour cream.
- Fruit features in many recipes, particularly berries, apples, pears, and apricots.



KOHLRABI

Typical Dishes

- Hungarian-influenced soups (goulash soup) and stews (*paprikash*) of meat and vegetables.
- Noodle dishes.
- Fruit soups.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks are usually eaten. The heaviest meal is normally at midday.
- Table settings are standard European.

- Breakfast is often an array of breads or rolls, with sausages or preserved meats, washed down by coffee or milk.
- The main meal is usually composed of three courses, an appetizer which is often a soup, a main course, usually meat with potatoes or noodles, and a sweet.
- The evening meal is usually soup with or without sandwiches, with coffee served afterward.
- Drinks are often fruit juices, carbonated bottled drinks, wine, beer, coffee.

Cold Blueberry Soup
(Boruvkova Polevka Studena)

Cold fruit soups garnished with sour cream are a common first course in the summer.

3 cups blueberries (or any summer berries)
⅛ tsp salt
cinnamon and sugar to taste
3 cups water
3 TBS flour
1½ cups sour cream
lemon juice to taste

Add blueberries, salt, cinnamon, and sugar to water.
Bring to a boil.
Stir flour slowly into 1 cup sour cream until smooth, and add gradually to soup.
Continue simmering for 5–10 minutes.
Allow to cool. Add lemon juice to taste (in summer it is traditional for dishes to have a sharper flavor).
Serve chilled, garnished with dollops from the remaining sour cream.

Kohlrabi with Eggs and Ham (Brukve s Vejci a Sunkou)

Kohlrabi, a cousin of the cabbage, grows as a round bulb above ground with leave stalks sprouting from its sides. This serves as a common supper dish.

½ cup butter
½ cup onion, chopped
6 kohlrabis (about 1½ pounds), peeled, and cut into julienne strips
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp caraway seeds
¼ cup stock
3 eggs, beaten
½ pound ham, chopped fine
3 TBS parsley, minced

Melt butter in a heavy saucepan and fry onions until softened.
Add kohlrabi, salt, pepper, and the caraway seeds.
Add ½ of the stock, and simmer briefly, adding just enough stock to keep moist, if needed. The dish must not be soupy.

When the kohlrabi is tender, add the beaten eggs and ham.
Cover saucepan and continue to simmer until eggs are set.
Sprinkle with parsley and serve with potatoes or toast.

Sandwiches (Chlebicky)

Sandwiches are eaten as a light meal or snack, often accompanied by local beer.

Cheese and Celery Filling

- 1½ ounces butter
- 1½ ounces yellow cheese, grated
- 4 tsp celery, grated or finely minced
- salt to taste
- 8 slices white bread
- 1 tart apple, peeled, cored, and sliced very thin

Cream together butter, cheese, celery, and salt.
Spread bread slices with mixture.
Garnish each sandwich with a slice of apple.

Cream Cheese and Radish Filling

- 12 radishes, 8 finely minced, 4 cut into halves
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- salt to taste
- 8 slices white bread
- 4 parsley sprigs

Mix minced radish with cream cheese and salt.
Spread on slices of bread.
Garnish with a sprig of parsley.

Bean Goulash with Beef (Fazolovy Gulas s Hovezim Masem)

Originally a Hungarian dish, this has been adapted to Czech tastes and is served for lunch.

- 4 TBS lard
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- 1 pound stewing beef, cubed
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup flour
- 3–4 cups water
- 3 cups canned navy or pinto beans, with bean liquid
- 2 TBS tomato paste
- ½ tsp paprika

Heat lard in heavy pot and fry onion until golden brown.
Sprinkle meat with salt and pepper, and dust with flour.
Stir in meat to onions and brown on all sides.

(*continued*)

Add water to the bean liquid to make up 6 cups in all. Add to meat, and simmer over medium heat for 30 minutes, or until meat is very tender.
Add beans, tomato paste, and paprika. Cook for another 5–10 minutes.
If the soup is too thick, add just a bit of water. This soup should be fairly thick.
Serve with bread.

Chicken Cooked in Paprika (Chicken Paprikash)

A dish with Hungarian origins, this is served with potatoes or noodles as a main dish.

2 TBS lard or oil
1 chicken (about 2½ pounds), cut into skinless serving pieces
1 onion, sliced thin
1½ cups water, enough to cover chicken
1 pint sour cream
2 TBS flour
½ tsp paprika
salt to taste

Heat lard over medium heat, and brown chicken on all sides in a heavy saucepan.
Add onion, stir and cook for 2–3 minutes, then add water to barely cover chicken.
Cover, and simmer gently over low heat until chicken is tender, about 30–40 minutes.
Add water if needed.
When chicken is tender, remove from heat. Take chicken from pan and set aside, but keep warm.
In a food processor, blend sour cream and flour together until smooth.
Add some hot chicken gravy to the sour cream mixture and blend until smooth.
Pour blended sour cream mixture into the saucepan and mix well.
Season with paprika and salt.
Bring sour cream mixture to a simmer and allow gravy to thicken.
Return chicken to the pan, and cook until heated through.
Serve with boiled potatoes or noodles.

Fruit Pies (Kolaches)

A popular dessert or snack making use of the plentiful local fruit.

2 cups milk
½ cup sugar
1 egg, beaten
½ cup butter
1 tsp salt
2 TBS dry yeast
6 cups flour
3 cups filling

Scald milk.
Add sugar, egg, butter, and salt, and beat thoroughly.
Remove from heat and cool mixture to body temperature and pour into a large bowl.
Sprinkle yeast over the warm milk mixture. Leave in a warm place for 15 minutes until bubbles form.
Gradually mix in flour and knead to a very soft dough. Cover with a damp cloth or towel, and leave in a warm place until doubled in size—about 1 hour.
Shape dough into golf-sized balls.
Place on greased baking sheets 2 inches apart. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
Make a cavity in the center of each ball with your thumb.
Fill the cavity with filling, smooth to seal well, and bake at 350°F for 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden brown.

Filling

½ pound dried apricots
hot water to cover
⅓ cup sugar
¼ tsp lemon juice
1½ tsp butter

Cover apricots with hot water and simmer for 20 minutes until tender.
Drain and process until smooth in a blender or food processor with sugar and lemon juice.
Transfer to a pan, add butter and simmer until butter melts.

DENMARK

Denmark is a Northern European Nordic country, mainly consisting of a peninsula and an island between the Baltic and North Seas. Denmark also oversees the external affairs of the Faroe Islands and of Greenland, whose population is composed mainly of Inuit. A maritime power around the first millennium CE, Denmark once ruled over Norway and parts of both Britain and Ireland.

The climate is cool, and the terrain is largely rolling hills.

Danish food is similar to that of its neighbors Norway and Sweden, with an emphasis on good-quality fish and dairy products simply prepared and flavored.

Foodstuffs

- Pork is the favorite meat; all parts used. Blood and offal used in soups and sausages. Beef, chicken, other poultry, and eggs are consumed.
- Fish such as herring, shrimp, eel, salmon, trout, mackerel, flat fish, cod (fresh, dried, or salted) are consumed.
- Milk, buttermilk, cream, butter, a variety of cheeses.
- Potatoes, red (preferred) or green cabbage, string beans, carrots, white asparagus, cauliflower, onions, kale, mushrooms. Pickled cucumber, beet.
- Apples, lingonberries.
- Seasonings: cream, butter, mustard, horseradish, dill, onions, leeks; poppy seeds and caraway seeds on breads or rolls. For baked goods, cardamom, saffron, and toasted almonds are used.

Typical Dishes

- The most famous Danish dish is the *smørrebrød* (literally "bread-and-butter"): an open sandwich topped with different toppings.
- Salted meat and fish, dried or smoked foods are favorites.
- Soups: yellow pea soup (*gule aerter*); a traditional soup made from stale rye crusts and beer (*ollebrod*). Buttermilk soup (*kaernemaelkskoldskal*) is a cold summer soup of whipped raw eggs and chilled buttermilk, lemon-flavored.
- Bread and pastries: rye bread; apple cakes dusted with cinnamon or confectioners' sugar (*aebleskiver*); pancakes (*pandekager*) with lingonberry preserves.

- Meat: *frikadeller*—meatballs of ground veal and pork; added to almost every *smørrebrød*, and eaten at least once a day.
- Egg dishes: baked custard (*aeggestand*); bacon and egg omelet (*flaeskeaeggekage*).
- Dessert: sweetened fresh berries in fresh cream (*rodgrod med flode*).
- Festive dishes: *lutefisk* (traditional Christmas Eve dish made from lye-cured cod served with mustard sauce); special Christmas *smørrebrød* with cold and hot dishes of fish, meat, breads of every kind, cheeses, cream-filled cakes, crispy cookies; rich rice pudding hiding a lucky almond, served everywhere in Scandinavian countries on Christmas Eve (*risengrod*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks are normally eaten by most people.
- Table settings are European standard, and usually formal and elegant with an eye to style.
- *Smørrebrød* makings are served as a buffet for people to help themselves. Sandwiches are usually eaten in a strict order, starting with fish (herring), through meats and eggs, and ending with a sweet toppings. *Smørrebrød* may be eaten leisurely for dinner in company, particularly during long summer evenings.
- Breakfast: usually early, before work and school at 8:00 a.m.—a variety of yogurts, bread, muesli, cheeses, stewed fruit. In the winter, oat or other porridge might be served.
- Lunch: light meal of soup, sandwiches, beer. Or *smørrebrød* buffet.
- Dinner: two-three course meal of meat and potatoes or poached fish with sauce and potatoes or soup and dessert; (if eaten out) a multicourse meal including appetizers (salted or smoked foods); one or two hot dishes; fruit and pastries with coffee.
- Snacks: pastries, cakes, crisp cookies with coffee; cheeses with bread. Fruit juices, carbonated bottled drinks.
- Many meals are accompanied by or followed by coffee. Buttermilk and beer are also common drinks at meals. *Akvavit* (liquor distilled from potatoes or grain) and bottled carbonated soft drinks are also consumed.
- Eating out is very common, particularly for lunch and for dinner in the summer time.

Fish Pudding (Fiskebudding)

Fish are eaten in many forms, both as an appetizer, and as a central dish. This light pudding, almost a soufflé, is eaten as an appetizer.

2 pounds skinless white fish fillets (cod or halibut), minced
1 tsp salt
1 cup heavy cream, whipped until stiff
4 egg whites, beaten until stiff
butter to grease mold

Preheat oven to 340°F.
Add salt to fish and mix well.

(*continued*)

Fold in cream, then egg whites, mixing well after each addition.
Generously butter a baking dish or casserole, large enough to accommodate the fish mixture just half way up the sides.
Gently pour mixture into dish and smooth the top. Set it in a pan and pour enough boiling water to come ¾ of the way up the sides of the soufflé dish.
Cover tightly with foil, and bake for 1 hour or more, until the pudding tests done (insert a wooden skewer in the middle, and if it comes out dry, the pudding is done).
Let pudding rest for 10 minutes. Pour off any liquid in the baking dish.
Run a knife to loosen the pudding all around, and invert onto a warmed serving dish.

Green Pea Soup (Grønærtesuppe)

Hot thick soups are a necessity in the colder months. This may serve as an appetizer, or as a main dish for lunch.

1 pound new green peas in the pod (or substitute defrosted frozen shelled peas)
5 cups water or vegetable stock
1 cup fresh dill, minced
5–6 fresh sage leaves, minced
½ cup fresh parsley, minced (reserve 4 tsp for garnish)
1 onion, chopped
4 large potatoes, diced
½ pound carrots, diced
2 TBS butter
2 TBS flour
salt to taste
4 tsp butter

Shell the peas and boil the shells in water with the herbs and onion until reduced by one-fourth, about 20–25 minutes. (If using frozen peas, use vegetable stock). Strain stock and return to the pan.
Bring stock to a boil, and add potatoes and carrots. Simmer until vegetables are tender, about 15–20 minutes.
Rub butter into flour with your fingers until thoroughly combined. Stir into the soup. Season to taste and remove from heat once soup is thickened.
Serve hot garnished with parsley, a pat of butter (if desired), and flour dumplings (recipe follows).

Flour Dumplings (Melboller)

Dumplings are used to make a midday soup heartier.

3 TBS butter
3 TBS flour
½ cup boiling water
2 eggs, separated, whites beaten stiff
salt to taste
powdered cardamom
boiling salted water

Melt butter over low heat in a saucepan. Sprinkle with flour and combine until butter is completely absorbed.
Gradually add boiling water, stirring with a wooden spoon until mixture leaves the sides of the saucepan.
Let cool for 2–3 minutes, then stir in yolks, salt, and cardamom and lastly the egg whites. Form into tiny balls about fingernail size.
Slip a few at a time into boiling water and cook, keeping water lightly simmering, for 5–7 minutes.
Remove with a slotted spoon and place in soup.

Danish-Style Hamburgers (Dansk Bøf med Løg)

This is a main dish, often eaten on summer evenings.

4 TBS unsalted butter
1 onion, peeled and cut into rings, ½-inch thick
2 pounds ground beef
1 cup beef bouillon
½ tsp salt
black pepper to taste
¼ tsp sweet paprika
4 TBS flour
2 TBS butter

Heat half the butter and sauté onions until softened. Take out and reserve.
Divide the meat into four and shape lightly into patties. Dredge patties with half the flour.
Heat remaining butter in the same pan on medium heat.
Quickly brown patties on both sides, reduce heat, and cook until done but still moist.
Transfer patties to a rimmed serving dish; scatter onions over. Keep warm.
Add bouillon to the pan, and adjust seasoning.
Rub remaining flour with butter, stir into the bouillon and cook only until thickened.
Pour gravy over patties, and serve with potatoes, cooked beets, and currant jelly, or serve as *smørrebrød* (open-faced sandwich), each topped with a crisply fried egg.

Farmgirl's Potatoes (Bondepiges Kartofler)

Potatoes are a major source of carbohydrates, and eaten with almost every meal.

4 cups grated potato
1 medium onion, minced
2 eggs, beaten
salt and white pepper to taste
oil for deep-frying

(*continued*)

Mix potato, onion, and eggs. Season to taste.
Shape into balls about golf-ball size.
In a deep fryer, heat oil to 350°F.
Fry balls a few a time, taking care not to crowd the pan, until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels, and serve immediately.

Open-Faced Sandwiches (Smørrebrød)

These "garnished breads" are one of the great pleasures of Danish kitchen. Eaten as a snack, as drinking food, or even as a full meal, there are hundreds of different topping variations.

Smoked Herring with Egg (Røget sild med æg)

- 2 fillets smoked herrings, about ½ pound
- 4 large onion rings, about ¼-inch thick
- 1 lightly cooked egg yolk (poached or fried) per sandwich
- 4 slices buttered bread

Cut each fillet in half, and place one piece on each slice of bread.
Lay an onion ring on the herring, and place the egg yolk inside the onion ring.

Mashed Anchovies (Ansjos-Smørecreme)

- 3–4 pieces whole salted anchovies, mashed (or 2 TBS anchovy sauce)
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp onion, minced
- strips of pimiento (preserved red bell pepper) or fresh red bell pepper
- 4 slices dark rye bread

Mix first three ingredients together well.
Spread on bread and garnish with strips of pimiento.

Chicken Spread 1 (Smørecreme af Hakket Kyllingebrød)

- ¾ cup cooked chicken, minced
- ⅓ cup crushed canned pineapple, drained
- 3 TBS mayonnaise

Mix the ingredients and spread on 4 slices of bread.

Chicken Spread 2 (Smørecreme af Hakket Kyllingebrød)

- 1 cup cooked chicken, minced roughly
- 1 cup toasted almonds, slivered
- 1 tsp onion, grated
- ½ tsp curry powder
- ½ cup mayonnaise

Mix the ingredients and spread on 4 slices of bread.

Chicken Spread 3 (Smørecreme af Hakket Kyllingebrød)

1 cup cooked chicken, finely minced
2 tsp cooked bacon, cubed finely
1 TBS lemon juice
4 drops Tabasco sauce

Mix the ingredients and spread on 4 slices of buttered bread.

Chive Butter (Purløgsmør)

½ cup soft butter, creamed
¼ cup chives, minced
4 drops Worcestershire sauce

Mix chives with the butter and sauce.
Spread on bread.

DJIBOUTI

Djibouti is a tiny former French colony on the Horn of Africa, slightly smaller than Massachusetts. On the shores of the Red Sea, it is sandwiched between Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. The climate is very hot, dry inland, and more humid, though without rain, along the coast.

The population is made up of two major ethnic groups: the Afars, largely nomadic camel herders speaking a language similar to Ethiopian, and the Issas, who are a Somali-speaking group of sedentary people.

Eid al Fitr is the festival that ends the fasting month of Ramadan in the Muslim calendar. Most Djiboutians are Muslims, and after the last day of fasting, they retire to a large family feast in celebration. Those that can afford it, serve numerous dishes to the table, others try to enrich the table to the best of their abilities.

A French influence in the cuisine is very strong.

Foodstuffs

- Mutton is the favorite meat, and many mutton dishes feature in local cuisine.
- Rice is imported but, as all over the Middle East and Northern Africa, has become a major staple.
- The Red Sea abounds with fish, and fish features in the cuisine of the sedentary Issas, less so for the Afars.

Typical Dishes

- Baked and grilled mutton.
- Pancakes of fermented batter are the common staple.
- Fish are eaten grilled, baked, or in stews.

Styles of Eating

- Though three-times-a-day eating is common in urban areas, nomads tend to eat only twice a day, with a light breakfast of sour milk mixed with flour or some bread.
- Men and women eat separately, usually out of a common dish or sometimes a small wickerwork raised table (a *mesob*).

- Evening meals are generally eaten by the family in common. On the mesob will be a large serving dish on which are arranged one or two sour-dough pancakes and several rolled-up or folded ones. On the spread-out pancakes are small mounds of sauce, stewed vegetables, whole chili peppers, meat, or fish. Each diner takes a bit of sour-dough pancake, dips it into the meat or stew, and brings the food to the mouth with the right hand only.

Mutton Soup (Fah-Fah Soup)

This soup is usually cooked for guests as a first course and is drunk out of glasses. The meat and potatoes may be served separately.

1 pound stewing mutton, cut into 1-inch cubes
½ pound potatoes, diced
¼ cabbage, chopped
1 leek, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
½ green bell pepper, cored, seeded and diced
1 onion, chopped
1 cup cilantro, minced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
salt to taste

Place meat and vegetables in a saucepan with water to cover.
Cover and simmer for 40 minutes.
Add cilantro, garlic, and salt and simmer for 20 minutes more, or until the meat and vegetables are tender.

Flavored Rice (Skoudeh Karis)

Meat cooked in rice called *harees* is popular throughout Arab-influenced areas of Eastern Africa. This version is served as the main meal, sometimes layered over sourdough pancakes.

3 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
1 pound mutton, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
½ tsp cumin powder
2 cardamom pods
2 cloves garlic
1½ cups water
1 cup rice
salt and pepper to taste

Fry the onions in the oil at medium heat until golden, and set aside.
Quickly brown the meat on all sides, add tomatoes and onions, and cook for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in spices, garlic, and water, and allow to simmer, covered, for 45 minutes.
When the meat is tender, stir in the rice, salt and pepper, and allow to simmer, covered tightly, on the lowest possible heat for 20–25 minutes. (Do not open the pot at any time while cooking the rice.)

(*continued*)

Remove from heat and allow to rest for another 10–15 minutes.
Serve as the main dish for the main meal.

Fish in Sauce (Marake Kaloune)

Fish is an important resource for urban Djiboutians. This would be served together with rice as a main meal.

¼ cup oil
1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and cut into ⅛-inch disks
2 onions, sliced fine
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 eggplant, cut into cubes
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1 TBS tamarind syrup (available from Asian stores)
4 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
1½ pounds any fish cut into bite-sized pieces
¼ cup parsley, finely minced

Heat oil over medium-high heat, and stir-fry potatoes until slightly browned. Drain, place in an oven-proof casserole, and set aside.
In the same oil, stir-fry the onions until golden brown.
Stir in the peppers, eggplant, and tomatoes, and fry for 5–7 minutes, until softened.
Stir in the tamarind syrup, garlic, salt, and pepper. Remove from heat.
Pour the vegetables and sauce over the potatoes in the casserole, mixing in some water if the sauce is too thick.
Sprinkle the fish with salt and pepper, and place over the vegetables.
Bake, covered for 10 minutes, then uncovered for an additional 5–10 minutes. (Do not overcook the fish.)
Sprinkle with parsley and serve with rice.

Baked Fish (Poisson Pané au Four)

Possibly an adapted French recipe, this is served in restaurants.

1 pound fish fillets
2 eggs beaten with ½ tsp salt and pepper to taste
butter for greasing
¼ cup flour

Liberally butter an oven-proof dish.
Dry fillets with a paper towel.
Dip into the beaten egg mixture, coating liberally.
Roll fillets in flour until well coated, then place in the buttered dish.
Gently pour over the remaining egg.

Cook in a low oven (280°F) for 20–30 minutes or until the fish flakes easily.
Serve hot.

Spiced Yogurt Drink (Ambabour)

Ambabour is customarily drunk to mark the end of the month-long fasting during Ramadan, usually for breakfast on the first day of Eid el Fitr. This fermented yogurt is also drunk by Somalis in Northern Somalia (see box "Yogurt in the Middle East and Central Asia").

1 TBS coriander powder
½ tsp fenugreek powder
½ tsp cumin powder
pinch of salt
2 pounds flour
1 quart water
¼ tsp yeast (traditionally, a household would keep some of the ambabour back from the previous making to leaven the next batch)
2 large pots of natural yogurt
1 egg, beaten

Evening Before

Mix the dried spices, salt, and flour in a large bowl.
Add the water and mix thoroughly.
Stir in the yeast.
Cover the bowl and place in a warm place until the following day.

On the Day

Mix or whisk with yogurt and well-beaten egg.
The *ambabour* should be very liquid for drinking. In some households it is allowed to ferment for a few days to make it much more sour.

YOGURT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

Yogurt and other soured and curded milks, particularly derivatives of ewe's milk, play an important role in the cooking of many Middle Eastern and Central Asian cultures. Infecting fresh milk with a lactobacillus ensures that, like pickles, the milk will become preserved. It can then be used for cooking, eaten as is, dried to keep for longer periods, or thickened by allowing the whey to escape.

DOMINICA

An island state in the Caribbean, formerly a French possession, it became a British colony, becoming independent in 1978. It has kept its lush and natural vegetation, and it is said that it is the only Caribbean island that Christopher Columbus would recognize today.

The population comprises black, mixed, European, and a small Carib minority descended from the pre-Columbian inhabitants. The topography is rocky and mountainous, with a tropical climate. A range of tubers, fruits, and vegetables are grown.

The cuisine combines elements from Creole, other Caribbean, and British cooking.

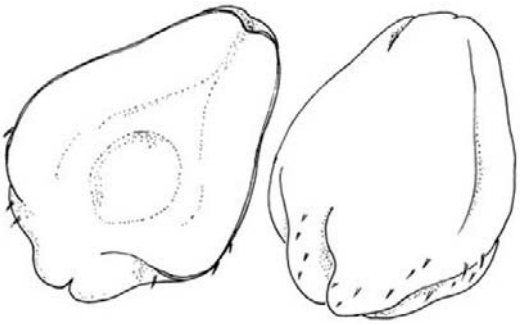
Foodstuffs

- Fish, shellfish such as prawns and crayfish, pork, goat, chicken.
- Wild game such as agouti, maniou or opossum, mountain chicken (a large frog called locally *crapaud*).
- Tubers such as dasheen, tannia, yam, and sweet potato; breadfruit, avocado, christophene (also known as *cho-cho*); cabbage, spinach, dasheen leaves (also called *callaloo* leaves).
- Mango, grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, banana, plantain.
- Sugar, coffee, cocoa, vanilla, citrus, coconuts, bananas, bay leaf are major crops.
- Seasonings: various herbs such as thyme, parsley, celery, chives, sage, sweet and hot peppers, ginger root, bay leaves, allspice, cloves, cinnamon.

Typical Dishes

- The most representative dishes are *sancoche* and *braff,* which are stews of salted meat or fish and vegetables.
- *Drolt* or *mess* is a goat or cow head cooked outdoors (at the beach or by the river) for celebrations.
- *Dasheen croquette*: a fritter of grated taro tuber, widely grown throughout the Caribbean.
- Souse is usually pig's feet in a gravy of hot peppers, thyme, parsley, and other herbs. The same gravy can flavor *lambi* (conch), lobster, and shrimps in a dish called *Gros Sauce*.
- Curried goat is goat stew lightly flavored with curry powder.

- *Calalloo soup* is made of the green leaves of the taro plant or spinach, flavored with herbs, smoked ham bone and crabs, and eaten with bakes (fried dumplings).
- Crab back: crabmeat flavored with herbs and spices, sometimes combined with black pudding and stuffed back into the crab shell, covered with bread crumbs and baked, or dusted with spiced flour and fried.
- Juices are made from tropical fruits (mango, banana, papaya) as well as vegetables such as pumpkin, beets, and carrots blended with condensed milk and served cold with ice.



CHRISTOPHENE

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day, with snacks.
- Breakfast: local fresh fruits or fruit juice, fried flying fish, and bakes (fried bread); or porridge of diced green banana cooked in spiced milk. Locally grown coffee to drink.
- Lunch: light meal of vegetable soup (popularly pumpkin or callaloo) with dumplings, or Indian-influenced (via Trinidad) roti stuffed with a sauce of curry-flavored seafood (conch, crab, or shrimp) or meat (beef, chicken, or goat).
- Dinner: more substantial 2–3 course meal of freshly caught fish or meat (often smoked wild game) fried, roasted or stewed, with side dishes of root and green vegetables. Dessert of fresh tropical fruit or tropical fruit-based ice cream (guava, coconut, or soursop).
- Snacks: fruits, fruit juice, coffee with sweet or savory pastries.
- Drinks: local tropical fruit juice, locally brewed beer, coffee, tea, bottled soft drinks.

Stew (Sancoche)

This stew is commonly eaten during the noon or evening meal. Note the spelling which is similar to *sancocho*, a stew of Spanish origin. This dish is often served with boiled "ground" provisions: the term used in the Caribbean for sweet or regular potatoes, and other root vegetables, such as *dasheen* or *tannia*. Boiled sweet (ripe) and green plantains or green bananas are also a good accompaniment.

There is no one way of making *sancoche* as each family innovates with what is on hand. Some cooks will flavor it with a tsp of curry powder, instead of thyme. Others will leave out the sweet peppers and substitute hot peppers. Ground provisions may be cooked in the stew adding their unique flavors and colors, with vegetables such as spinach, cabbage, okra or dasheen leaves added toward the end. Salt pork may also be used with the salted fish. Whatever its variations, *sancoche* is aromatic and richly flavored.

If dumplings and ground provisions are added to *sancoche* and fresh fish is used, omitting the coconut milk, what you get is the Dominican delicacy called *braff* (broth).

1 pound dried salted codfish (also commonly called salt cod or *bacalao* in Latin American or other specialty groceries)
3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
3–4 sprigs or 3 TBS fresh thyme
red bell pepper, sliced into strips
green bell pepper, sliced into strips
1 8-ounce can coconut milk
about 1 cup fresh or evaporated milk
3 eggs

Soak salted cod to remove some of the salt (preferably overnight in the refrigerator and change the water at least twice) or simmer for 10 minutes in four cups of water. Drain.
Shred the codfish, discarding any bones or skin.
In a saucepan heat the oil and soften the onion and minced garlic.
Stir in the codfish, thyme, and peppers, cooking for about 5 minutes.
Pour in the coconut milk, and let it slowly come to a boil. Watch carefully and stir occasionally so that the coconut milk does not burn.
Add milk (not much) to thin the sauce if it is too thick.
Crack eggs directly into the pot to cook.

Curried Green Figs

"Green figs" or simply "figs," in Dominica as in other Caribbean islands, are not the well-known Mediterranean fruit, but refer to green bananas, which are treated as vegetables. They are different from green plantains, and both can often be seen gracing the same dish, for example, *sancoche* or *braff*.

Diced green bananas can also appear as a porridge for breakfast, cooked in milk until soft and flavored with cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, and brown sugar.

The original recipe for curried green figs included salted codfish, which is omitted here, because this dish is intended to be served as a side-dish with the *sancoche* above that already has salted cod. However if you wish to make this as a main dish, stir in 1 cup shredded presoaked codfish (see preparation in the *sancoche* recipe) together with the green bananas. Serve this easy vegetable dish with *roti* (West Indian pan bread) or plain boiled rice.

1 pound green figs (green bananas)
2 TBS oil
1 onion, sliced
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 TBS curry powder
2 cups coconut milk
salt, pepper to taste
3 TBS parsley, chopped

Peel bananas and cut crosswise into slices $\frac{1}{4}$-inch thick.
In a saucepan, heat oil and sauté onion and garlic until softened.
Stir in curry powder.
Add bananas and stir well.

Pour in coconut milk, and add salt and pepper to taste.
Reduce heat and simmer until bananas are tender.
To serve, garnish with parsley.

Avocado Drink

This refreshing juice presents two of Dominica's most common products. Other popular juices combine condensed milk with local fruit or even vegetables (such as pumpkin, beets, carrots), flavored with almond or vanilla extract and/or sometimes sprinkled with nutmeg.

3 avocados, halved and peeled, pit discarded
3½ cups grapefruit juice
⅔ cup sugar
½ tsp vanilla
ice

Puree in a blender or food processor the avocados, juice, and sugar. Chill. Stir in vanilla and pour over ice into glasses for a predinner drink or as a dessert.

Smothered Chicken

Many Dominican families in the countryside raise their own chickens, which are often cooked flavored with spices and coconut milk. The vinegar also helped to preserve the dish in the days before refrigeration. This is served for a main meal.

1 tsp vinegar
2 tsp curry powder
1 tsp fresh grated ginger
½ tsp salt
pepper to taste
4 whole chicken legs or quarters
¼ cups flour
oil for frying
2 large onions, finely chopped
3 cups coconut milk

Mix vinegar, 1 teaspoon curry powder, grated ginger, ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper, and rub all over chicken. Marinate for 2 hours or overnight in the refrigerator.
Preheat oven to 375°F.
Mix flour with the remaining curry powder.
Wipe chicken dry and roll in flour. Quickly brown in hot oil.
Drain chicken on paper towels. (The chicken does not need to be completely cooked at this point.)
Lay chicken in a 10×10-inch baking dish. Top with onions and coconut milk.
Bake for 30–45 minutes or until chicken is done.
Serve with mashed potatoes or plantains.

Dumplings or Bakes

Dumplings (note that in other Caribbean islands, the word is spelled without a "g") go with everything from fried chicken and fish to *ackee* and saltfish, and are often added to stews and soups, like *sancoche*. When fried, dumplings are called "bakes" and are eaten for breakfast, often served with fried flying fish. Bakes stuffed with tuna are a delicacy.

1½ cups flour
1 TBS margarine or shortening
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
¼ cup milk
¼ cup (more or less) water
oil for frying

Mix flour with margarine, baking powder, salt, sugar, milk, and enough water to make a stiff dough. Knead well for 10 minutes. Let rest 5–10 minutes under a moist towel.

Bakes

Prepare a frying pan with ¼ cup of oil and heat under a low fire.
Shape pieces of dough into small balls. Flatten the balls to a small pancake.
Place three or four bakes on the frying pan and cook slowly until each side is slightly golden.

Dumplings

Boil 4–5 cups of water in a pan. Add 1 tsp salt.
Put the balls one at a time into the boiling water.
Allow dumplings to cook for 5–10 minutes after they float.
Cook for a total of 20 minutes for a waxy dumpling.

Carrot and Christophene Casserole

Christophene is a tropical vegetable widely grown in the Caribbean. It is known variously as *cho-cho*, *chayote*, or vegetable pear. The fruit grows on a vine and looks like large pale green pears, with occasional prickles. At the core of each fruit is a large, flat, soft seed, which is edible. The pale green flesh is crisp and subtly flavored, like a dense-textured cucumber. It is eaten raw in salads, or can be boiled, baked, or stir-fried. The christophene fruit itself can be planted straight into the ground and shoots will grow out from the top. The young shoots are also edible.

This colorful casserole with its alternating layers of carrot and christophene makes a special side-dish to serve at a celebration meal. As a main dish for a light meal at noon or evening, it can be served with a cucumber and tomato salad or coleslaw and some boiled ground provisions (sweet potatoes or dasheen tubers).

1 cup coarsely grated carrot
1 cup coarsely grated christophene
2 eggs
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
½ cup finely chopped onion

4 ounces grated mild cheddar cheese
1 cup milk
1 cup bread crumbs
1 TBS butter or margarine
additional grated cheese for topping, 4 TBS
additional bread crumbs for topping, 4 TBS
additional butter or margarine for topping, 2 TBS
1 clove garlic, minced or nutmeg, ½ tsp

Put carrot and christophene separately into two bowls.
Into each bowl, add 1 egg and half of all the remaining ingredients.
Mix well.
Preheat the oven to 350°F.
Grease a 1½ quart casserole dish with butter.
Spoon four alternating layers of grated carrot and christophene into the dish.
Mix topping bread crumbs and cheese. Sprinkle all over top layer.
Cut the remaining butter into small dice. Sprinkle over topping.
Sprinkle with minced garlic or nutmeg.
Bake for 40–50 minutes, or until done and topping is crisp and golden.

Banana Cake

Bananas and citrus fruits are plentiful and eaten fresh for dessert or snacks. When bananas are over-ripe, they are made into cakes, flavored with nutmeg or allspice—frequently used spices in Dominica—and tangy lemon and orange rind. Warm or cold, this aromatic banana cake can be served for dessert or a snack.

2 cups flour
½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
1 cup sugar
1 cup butter or ¾ cup vegetable oil
½ tsp nutmeg or allspice
grated rind of one lemon
grated rind of one orange
2 eggs
¼ cup buttermilk or yogurt
1 cup mashed ripe bananas
2 TBS cold water
4 TBS sugar

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Mix together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
Cream well the sugar, butter, nutmeg, citrus rind, eggs, buttermilk, and bananas.
Thoroughly mix the flour mixture into the creamed bananas.
Pour into a greased 9×13-inch baking pan.
Sprinkle water and sugar over the cake batter.
Bake at 350°F for 30 to 35 minutes, or until cake tests done.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Located southeast of Florida, it shares the second largest island in the Caribbean (Hispaniola) with Haiti. Once colonized by France and Spain, it achieved independence in 1865. The highest peak in the Caribbean, Pico Duarte, lies here, and the "Dominican Alps," as the central mountain range is often called, with its cool pine forests and clear rivers where strawberries and other cool-climate crops are cultivated, are an unexpected feature. In its lowlands, fertile valleys grow tropical crops such as sugarcane and coffee, which are major exports.

The population is a mixture of those of Iberian and African descent. Dominican cooking reflects links with Spain, Africa, and neighboring Caribbean countries.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: yams, cassava, rice, and plantains.
- Seafood, chicken, goat, beef, eggs, dairy products.
- Vegetables: cabbage, yams, plantains, beans, potatoes, corn.
- Tropical fruits: banana (*guineo*), papaya (*lechoza*), sweet sop, custard apples, star apple, pineapple, tamarind, passion fruit, and the unusual *mamey* apple.
- Bread: *casabe*, a flat and round bread made of cassava flour, is a traditional Caribbean Indian food still widely eaten.
- Drinks: coffee, beer, and rum (local products), tropical fruit juices with or without condensed milk (e.g., passion fruit, called *chinola* here; *mamey* apple), fizzy soft drinks, mixed fruit nonalcoholic punch.
- Seasonings: onions, garlic, tomatoes, hot pepper, cilantro. *Sofrito* is a table relish made of chopped-up herbs, onions, celery, hot and sweet peppers: the combinations vary with each family.

Typical Dishes

- Stews of Spanish origin: *sancocho*, made from seven kinds of meat, for example, goat, pork, tripe, oxtail, chicken, rabbit, or pigeon. It is served with avocado, wild rice, cassava or plantains, and is prepared differently by region. Tripe stewed in tomato and garlic (*mondongo*) is traditional for Sunday lunch.

- One-pot rice dishes: *asopao* is thick, flavorful, and soupy with bits of chicken or seafood; *locrio* is less soupy but similarly based on seafood or chicken and vegetables.
- Roast goat (*chivo asado*): marinated in rum and spices for tenderness and served with flat round cassava bread (*casabe*) (see box "Asado").
- Conch (*lambi*) cooked with tomato and garlic as a stew, or marinated in vinaigrette.
- Mashed plantain with pork crackling and garlic (*mofongo*): common side dish for lunch or supper, often offered as a snack at street stalls.
- Snacks include:
  - Turnovers filled with beef, chicken, or cheese (*pastelitos, empanadas*).
  - Cracked wheat and meat patties (*quipes*: Dominican adaptations of similar Middle Eastern patties called *kibbeh*).
  - Johnnycakes (*yaniqueques*): fried corn bread.
  - Crackling of pork skin or chicken pieces (*chicharones*).
  - Pork sandwiches (*chimichurri*).
  - Plantains: green, twice-fried stamped *tostones*; ripe and fried are *fritos maduros*.
  - Baked whole sweet potatoes.
- Desserts: sweet porridge of beans, coconut milk, sweet potatoes, raisins, cassava and cinnamon; creamy rice or corn puddings (*majarete*); caramel custard and tropical fruit flans (e.g., pineapple); sherbet of tropical fruits, such as *mamey*.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: traditionally *mangú* (cassava or plantain porridge) or boiled cassava with scrambled eggs and sautéed onions. Accompaniments: slices of deep-fried Dominican cheese (white and salty), deep-fried salami, hot cocoa drink, or coffee with milk. In cities: bread, jam, and coffee.
- Lunch: most people go home to eat lunch, which is the heaviest meal of the day. The national dish is *la bandera*, assembled from separately cooked rice, beans, savory chicken or meat (sometimes seafood), and salad. The usual drink is cold water. A sweet of fresh fruit or juice may follow or just a cup of coffee (*un cafecito*).
- Snacks: eaten mid-morning or mid-afternoon and are bought at street stalls, corner stores (*colmados*), or markets.
- The evening meal (*la cena*): served late, usually after 8 p.m., often with similar dishes as breakfast.
- Milk and egg-based desserts or corn and tropical fruit puddings are often prepared.

ASADO

Asado is the generic term for beef or other types of meat cooked on open grills stoked by natural wood embers. Diners can specify a specific cut of beef or a platter of various cuts to include sausages, ribs, and variety meats, called *parrillada*. There are many grill restaurants, also called *parrilladas*, that specialize in this type of cuisine.

Churrasco is the term used for this type of cooking in Brazil and Portugal, using charcoal, instead of wood embers. The restaurants that specialize in this grilled cuisine are called *churrasqueiras* (Portuguese/Brazilian). In Spanish-speaking South America, however, *churrasco* refers to a specific cut of meat, different for each country.

Mashed Plantains or Cassava (Mangú)

This most representative Dominican dish, made either of plantain or cassava, is eaten for breakfast or supper, served with scrambled eggs or deep-fried salami slices or salty white cheese.

4 unripe plantains (or cassava), peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
2 cups water
2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
1 TBS vinegar
4 TBS butter
1 cup cold water
salt

Boil the plantains in 2 cups water with 1 tsp salt until very tender, about 20–30 minutes.
While plantains are boiling, heat the oil in a skillet. Stir in onions, frying until soft. Add ¼ tsp salt and vinegar. Set aside.
Drain the plantains and mash well. Add butter and water, mixing well until very smooth. Top with onions and flavored vinegar.

Scrambled Eggs Dominican Style (Revoltillo de Huevos)

This simple but tasty dish is served with cassava or plantain porridge (*mangú*) for breakfast or supper.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
1 large tomato, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
½ cup ham, diced
5 eggs, beaten
1 tsp vinegar
salt to taste

Heat oil in a skillet. Stir in vegetables and ham, cooking until vegetables are tender.
Add eggs, stirring frequently until set but still moist. Stir in vinegar and salt.
Serve hot.

Steak and Onions (Filete Encebollado)

This way of preparation makes for a very tender steak full of flavor from the oregano, garlic, and onions. The steaks are traditionally accompanied by white rice, a salad of tomatoes, cucumbers, avocados, bell peppers, and other seasonal vegetables plus a side dish of stewed beans.

4 pieces round steak
juice of 1 large lemon
½ tsp ground black pepper
salt to taste
½ tsp oregano
2 TBS oil
½ tsp mashed garlic
4 small red onions sliced in strips
¼ cup water

Rub steaks all over with lemon juice; marinate for 2 hours or overnight, refrigerated.
Remove steaks, reserving juice.
Sprinkle steaks with pepper, salt, and oregano.
In a skillet, heat the oil until hot.
Quickly sear the steaks on both sides (they should not be completely done) and set aside.
Add water to the pan, and bring to a boil, scraping the pan. Add juice, garlic, and onions.
Check seasoning, adding more salt or pepper, if desired.
Simmer at low heat for 2–3 minutes. Return the steaks to the pan and cook further as desired, or until warmed through.
To serve, ladle pan juices around steaks.

Dreamy Orange Juice
(Morir Soñando)

This orange drink literally means "to die dreaming" Serve after a meal or at any time as a refreshing drink. Dominicans like their juice very sweet: you may wish to omit the sugar. The original recipe calls for evaporated milk, a canned product that keeps better in the tropics. As its name suggests, evaporated milk is milk with its water content reduced (or evaporated), and thus thicker and with a higher fat content than fresh milk. The fresh equivalent is cream or half-and-half (half cream, half milk). If you use fresh cream, make sure to scald it first to avoid curdling.

2 TBS sugar
2 cups evaporated milk, scalded cream, or half-and-half cooled
3 cups orange juice
4 tall glasses or water goblets (to hold 8 ounces)
ice cubes (optional)

Stir the sugar into the milk until dissolved, and chill.
Chill each glass in the freezer until frosted.
Place ice cubes into glasses.
Pour milk halfway into each glass.
Add orange juice, stirring constantly.
Serve at once.

Potato Salad Russian Style (Ensalada Rusa)

"Russian salad" is a favorite in Dominica as well as in Latin America (with several variations). It is served on special occasions and is a traditional side dish for Christmas dinner, served with roast meat (usually pork or goat) or poultry.

1 pound whole salad potatoes
3 carrots
4 eggs, hard-boiled: 3 chopped, 1 sliced into rings (for garnish)
1 cup frozen sweet corn, defrosted and parboiled
½ cup frozen peas, defrosted and parboiled
1 red apple, diced
1 medium sweet red onion, half chopped fine; half thinly sliced (for garnish)
½ cup mayonnaise
salt to taste

Boil potatoes and carrots until tender but not too soft, about 15–30 minutes (depending on size of potatoes).
Peel, dice, and place in a large bowl.
Mix in the rest of the ingredients and season.
Refrigerate for at least an hour before serving.
To serve, mound on a serving dish and garnish with onion and egg slices.

ECUADOR

Ecuador is in northwestern South America on the Equator, hence its name. A Spanish colony until 1830, its western coast faces the Pacific Ocean, providing plentiful fish and shrimp. Tropical fruits flourish in the hot and humid coastal plains, while cool higher elevations favor coffee cultivation and sheep and cattle raising.

The majority of the population are of mixed Amerindian-European-African descent. About a quarter are Amerindian.

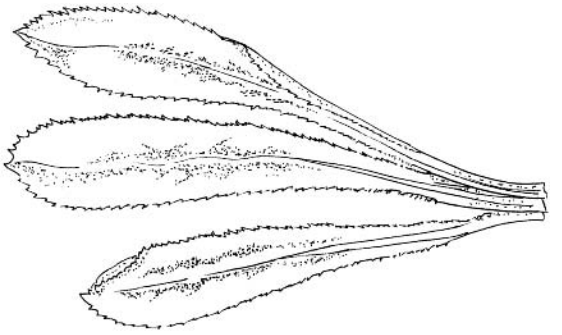
Ecuador shares with neighbors Colombia and Peru many dishes, mostly adapted from Spanish originals using local ingredients.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, beans, corn, potatoes, plantains, and *yucca* (cassava); two or more of these appear at the same meal.
- A major exporter of bananas, Ecuador grows many kinds, including yellow, red, and miniatures.
- Quinoa is a nutritious highland grain frequently used, especially in soup.
- Seasonings: a distinctive herb called *chillangua* with a stronger scent than cilantro; hot sauce called *aji* is a table condiment used like ketchup.

Typical Dishes

- Potato cheese patties (*llapingachos*).
- Fish or seafood cooked in coconut milk.
- Goat or mutton stew.
- Substantial vegetable soups with cassava, corn on the cob, potatoes and other vegetables.
- *Sebiche* (Ecuadorian spelling), different from Peruvian-style as fish or seafood are blanched in boiling water.
- *Locro*: soup of potato, cheese, corn, and avocado. *Yaguar locro* is made with blood sausage.
- Deep-fried or roast pork, accompanied by corn hominy.



CHILLANGUA

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast is typically bread, butter and jam with coffee, and juice; some have soup and cornmeal fritters for breakfast. A *petrolero* breakfast includes meat.
- Most important meal is lunch with 2–3 or more courses, beginning with an appetizer or soup. French fries and fried green bananas or plantains (*patacones*) are commonly eaten at main meals.
- Evening meal is similar to lunch.
- Various sweet and savory snacks accompany coffee during the day.
- Many indigenous groups live in the Oriente region, and on special occasions will serve game such as roast wild boar or guinea pig. After the guinea pig is eaten, it is customary to remove a tiny bone from its ear. The bone is put into a drink and guests try to swallow it. The one who succeeds gets to make a wish.
- Snacks: mashed baked plantain balls flavored with cheese and cilantro, traditionally served with coffee; sweet or savory corn pastries steamed in maize leaves (called *humitas* or *humintas*) or in banana leaves (*quimbolitos*); Chinese-style fried-rice; fried corn tortillas filled with meat (*empanadas*); sweet-corn pancakes; baked cheese-flavored balls in syrup; cinnamon-flavored rice pudding, served cold (also served as dessert).
- Desserts: usually with exotic fruits and coconut; figs with cheese; caramel roll—a sweet omelet rolled around a fruit filling; tarts filled with local fruits; fruit preserves; ice cream of tropical fruits (guava, papaya).
- Beverages: hot or cold drinks made of cream of corn (finely ground corn), flavored with cinnamon; thick, strong coffee; fruit juices of single fruit—papaya, mango, pineapple, berries, custard apple, passion fruit—or blends, served with meals. Herbs from the Amazon and highlands are made into healthy teas. Blue corn juiced with various fruits and health-giving herbs.

Red Pepper and Chickpea Salad (Ensalada)

Salads accompany most main meals.

1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
1 cup cooked chickpeas (garbanzos)
½ cup chopped celery
1 small red onion, finely sliced
½ medium cucumber, peeled, thinly sliced
Vinaigrette dressing:
3 TBS olive oil
1 TBS lemon juice (or to taste)
1 tsp prepared mustard
salt and pepper to taste

In a large bowl, combine all the vegetables. Mix the vinaigrette ingredients well and stir into the salad.

Shrimp Coconut Soup
(Chupe de Camarones con Coco)

This is a dish from the lowland coastal areas served as an appetizer for the main meal.

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
5 cups water
1 fish stock cube, crumbled
1 cup coconut milk
1 pound fresh shrimp
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded and chopped
salt and pepper to taste
juice of ½ lemon
2 TBS cilantro chopped
2 TBS popcorn (plain unflavored)

Heat oil over medium heat in saucepan. Stir-fry onion until soft.
Stir in garlic. Add water and stock cube. Bring to a boil then reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in coconut milk, shrimp, and bell pepper.
Season with salt and pepper.
When shrimps have turned pink, turn off heat. Stir in lemon juice.
Garnish with cilantro and popcorn. Serve immediately.

Pork Stew (Seco de Chancho)

This is a common midday meal, particularly among farmers.

2 TBS oil (preferably olive)
1½ pounds pork cubes
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 8¼-ounce can whole tomatoes, drained
1 red chili, seeded, minced
2 TBS minced cilantro
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp dried oregano leaves
1 12-ounce can or bottle beer
1 large red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
hot cooked rice

Heat oil over medium heat in stewing pan. Fry pork until browned, about 15–20 minutes. Take out pork and set aside.
Stir-fry onion until softened. Add garlic, tomatoes, chili, cilantro, salt, cumin, and oregano. Simmer uncovered for 10 minutes.
Stir in pork and beer. Let it come to a boil, then reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Stir in red pepper. Simmer uncovered until pork is tender and sauce thickened, about 15 minutes.
Serve over rice with side dishes of French fries and vegetable salad.

Cornmeal Omelet (Mote Pillo)

Cornmeal omelet is eaten for breakfast or as a snack.

1 TBS butter
1 small onion, minced
3 eggs, beaten
salt to taste
1 cup cooked cornmeal
2 TBS grated hard white cheese or cheddar

Melt butter over medium heat in a frying pan. Stir-fry onion until soft.
Stir in eggs, salt, and cornmeal, mixing well.
Turn down heat and leave to cook until done but still moist.
Turn off heat. Divide into four servings and garnish with cheese.

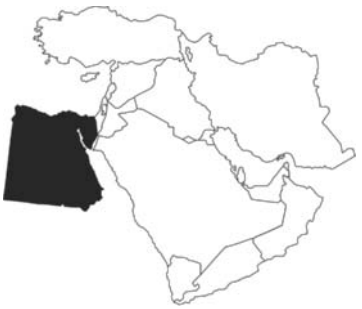
Apple Rings (Rosquitas de Manzana)

Apple rings are served as a common dessert.

1 cup milk
2 eggs
3 TBS sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract
4 ounces self-rising flour or 4 ounces flour and ½ TBS baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
4 very firm apples, preferably Granny Smith, peeled, cored, and cut into thick rings
oil for deep-frying
confectioners' sugar

Blend first six ingredients to make a light batter. Keep chilled.
Wipe the apple rings dry on paper towels.
Heat 2 inches of oil in a deep-fryer to medium-hot.
Dip apple rings one at a time into the batter, and fry a few at a time. Turn them over for uniform browning.
Drain on paper towels; keep warm in a low oven. Serve hot, dusted with confectioners' sugar.

EGYPT



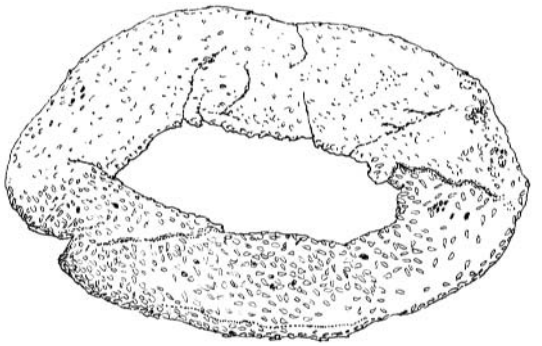
Egypt, located at the junction between Africa and Asia, is one of the earliest civilizations, with a culinary history going back at least three thousand years. Egypt's glory is the Nile, which allows intensive agriculture along its length, and whose annual rising would flood, and thus enrich, agricultural fields (now restrained by the Aswan Dam in the Upper Nile). With the exception of the narrow Nile river valley, much of the country is a desert. The climate is hot and dry, except in coastal areas and the Nile valley, where it is hot and humid. The Nile delta is the traditional breadbasket of Egypt (and formerly, of the entire Mediterranean basin).

The Egyptian people are a mix of original inhabitants, Arabs, and Nubian (now Sudan) stock. Most are Muslims, though a significant Coptic Christian minority (who claim to be the direct descendants of pre-Arab Egyptians) also exists. Lengthy periods of independence were interspersed with foreign occupation, most notably (and lengthy) was the Greek and Roman period, and later, Ottoman Turkish rule.

As a consequence, Egyptian cuisine is highly sophisticated and blends many traditions. Poor people in the countryside still consume food that was eaten in Egypt in the days of the Pharaohs. Urban dwellers eat foods whose origins may be found in Turkey, Arabia, or Europe. Beer and risen crusty bread are credited to ancient Egyptian brewers and bakers. Many other dishes that we know of from grave goods and ancient writings have survived the millennia: round yeast breads; cakes with honey and dates; *ta'amiya* (deep fried bean patties); and *ful*–slow-simmered beans.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: corn, wheat, barley, rice, sorghum, and millet are the cereal crops produced in Egypt. The *fellaheen*'s (peasant's) staples are bread, onions, legumes, and copious drinks of very sweet tea. Their main source of protein, other than grains and legumes, is *mish* (ripened white cheese).
- Bread is the most important staple for all classes and the poorer the family, the greater the ratio of bread consumed to other foods. Wheat breads are considered the finest. *Bettawa* is yeast-leavened and baked in a fourteen-inch flat circle. The rural staple is unleavened corn millet, or sorghum (depending upon area) breads flavored with fenugreek.



KAAKH

- Legumes: very important for the diet, include *ful* (broad beans), lentils, chickpeas, horse beans, lima beans.
- Fish and seafood: *buri* (grey mullet) fresh or salted into *fessikh*; bass; sole; gilthead bream; swordfish; shrimp; eel.
- Rice, bulghur (cracked wheat), *farik* (green wheat), and couscous form the main ingredients of many festive dishes and are often used as stuffing (well seasoned) for meats, poultry, including pigeons, and vegetables.
- Oils from peanuts (*ful sudani*) and sesame seeds and butter, usually in the form of clarified butter (*samna*), are preferred.
- Fruits and nuts: guavas, figs, dates, peaches, pears, citrus, apricots, apples, loquats, cherries, nectarines, plums, and quinces. Hazel, almond, pistachio, walnut, pine nut; lesser crops of olives, bananas, pomegranates, grapes, and mangoes.
- Vegetables: onions and leeks (dating from ancient Egypt and mentioned in the Bible as Egyptian delights); tomatoes; okra, potato, eggplant, cauliflower, cabbage, and spinach; wild and cultivated leafy vegetables; tender seeds and leaves of chickpeas and broad beans; *molokhiya* (young jute mallow); radishes, carrots; lettuce; cucumbers. Pickled vegetables: carrots, turnips, radishes, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers. Okra and *molokhiya* are dried and used in soups and stews.
- Dairy: milk (cow and buffalo, some goat) is rarely used except in cooking; yogurt; *mish* (ripened white cheese), sometimes eaten seasoned with red peppers and fenugreek; soft white (like feta) and hard yellow cheese (*gibna*). A dried paste of soured milk blended with flour, salt and chilies (*kishk*) is cooked with water and eaten as the evening meal at rural tables with corn bread, onions, and sweet tea.

Typical Dishes

- Beans and pulses: dried beans are covered with water and allowed to sprout, then cooked (*ful nabit*); brown lentils and onions cooked with rice and served with yogurt and crunchy fried onions (*megadara*); *ful medames*, simmered seasoned beans served with olive oil and lemon juice; *ta'amiya*, fried bean patties served with spicy-hot sauces.
- Meat dishes: stew of meat, onions, tomatoes, and okra (*bamieh bilahmeh*); lima bean and beef stew (*bissara*); beef stew with greens (*dfina*); Egyptian-style meatballs with egg-lemon sauce (*kotelat*); baked casserole of meat and vegetables with the meat in the center and the vegetables arranged all around, seasoned with onions, garlic, and tomato juice (*saniet batatis*); casserole of ground meats and sliced vegetables and tomatoes arranged in layers (*torley*).
- Soups: jute leaf (*molokhiya*) soup; Turkish/Balkan egg and lemon clear soup (*shourba*).
- Fish cooked in a blend of seasonings and spices with water, until dry, and served chilled with lemon wedges (*sayadia*).
- Rice dishes: Bedouin lamb and rice (*mansaf*) served over whole-wheat bread sheets called *shrak*; rice cooked in broth with minced giblets, butter, and pine

nuts (*ruz damyat*); pasta, rice, and lentils topped with spicy tomato sauce and flecks of crisp browned onions (*kushari*).
- Vegetable dishes: vegetables (e.g., eggplants, zucchini, peppers) stuffed with savory rice and meat mixtures (*mehshi*).
- Festive dishes: layered bread, rice, and meats in garlic-flavored broth (*fetah*); chicken stuffed with flavored *bulghur*, or rice, poached, baked brown, then roasted inside a lamb (*ferakh bel burgul*).
- Sweets and confectionery: cookies of sweetened semolina filled with nuts and perfumed with rose or orange water (*ma'amoul*); crisp pastry rolls filled with nuts and raisins (*boughasha*); sweet couscous sprinkled with *samna*, peanuts, currants, and sugar; honey- and nut-pastries made with *filo* dough. *Umm 'Ali* (Ali's Mom) is a classical Egyptian dessert of crisp pastry crumbed with fruit and whipped cream.
- Drinks: sweetened coffee (in the towns); sweet tea (countryside). Water is traditionally served with meals. Soft drinks, carbonated beverages, and drinks made with prepared fruit syrups and plain water are used frequently. Nonalcoholic beer flavored with anise (*erkesous*); tamarind (*tamarhindi*) drink; *shaier*, made from roasted barley; *soubya* drink, made from fermented rice; *lubki*, ginger tea drunk hot or cold; hibiscus tea.
- Flavor principles: food tends to be well seasoned. Garlic and onions with tomato paste, fenugreek, sesame, coriander, mint, cumin, cinnamon, butter, honey, syrups; rosewater or orange blossom water. Sweet foods, including drinks, tend to be *very* sweet.

Styles of Eating

- In traditional dining, diners seat themselves informally on layered carpets while platters of food are placed on low wooden tables within easy reach. Food is traditionally eaten with the fingers of the right hand only or scooped up with flat bread. Soups are drunk from glasses or, in urban homes, eaten with a spoon. Bowls filled with lemon water are passed for washing the fingers. All foods are served simultaneously. Great difference between foods of upper and lower classes. Upper classes eat more meat, have many more dishes, and tend to eat at a table. Sheer quantity is important to hospitality: special dinners might have a score of dishes.
- Breakfast: *ful*, bread, olives, *mish*, and sweet tea or coffee; fruits may be eaten in season accompanying the bread and tea.
- Lunch: a repeat of breakfast, perhaps with added vegetables.
- Dinner: thick soup; olives with fresh onions and bread; a meat dish if possible; a legume dish, stuffed vegetables, sweet tea; fruit; coffee.
- Snacks: *ful medames*; *ta'amiya*; sesame bread (*kaakh*); sweet confections; fresh fruit; toasted nuts, peanuts and crispy seeds. Carbonated drinks, fruit mixtures, coffee, and tea. Sugar-coated nuts and confections made from ground nuts, sesame seeds, and sugar (*halwah*).

Fava Bean Stew (Ful Medames)

"Breakfast for the rich, three times a day for the poor" says an Egyptian saying. Not only is *ful* eaten at home, but stands dispense it to hungry passers-by from bubbling copper pots at all hours of the day. The name derives from the Arabic

word for beans, and the Coptic word for "buried" indicating the beans were traditionally buried in a sealed pot under the embers of the cooking fire, ready for the morning's breakfast. This cooking practice is mentioned in the Talmud, indicating the recipe is at least 2,000 years old.

1 pound dried fava beans (or 16 ounce can cooked fava beans)
1 cup water
1 large onion, chopped
1½ TBS olive oil
1 large tomato, diced
1 tsp cumin powder
¼ cup parsley, chopped salt, pepper, and red chili pepper to taste
juice of 2 lemons
3 TBS parsley, minced, for garnish

Pour boiling water over dried beans. Leave to soak for 2 hours at least, or preferably overnight.
Discard the water, then peel beans (the tough sheathing of the beans is edible, and many people leave them on, which doubles the cooking time).
Fry the onions until brown in one tablespoon of the oil.
Add tomatoes, parsley, spices, and seasoning. Cook for a few seconds while stirring. Add beans and enough water to almost cover.
Simmer for at least 1 hour (2 hours if beans are unpeeled—traditionally, pot is left on a very low heat overnight for best flavor) in a sealed pot on lowest heat. Longer cooking brings out the flavor. Make sure the pot is not opened during cooking.
Mash before serving.
Place on individual plates and flatten on the plate to make a basin. Drizzle good virgin olive oil and lemon juice, and garnish with fresh parsley.
Garnish, according to taste (and pocket) with hard-boiled egg, tahina sauce, fresh parsley, *ta'amiya*, sliced tomatoes, sliced onions, pickles, and olives.
Eat by scooping up beans with fresh pita bread.

Vegetable Patties (Ta'amiya)

Ta'amiya, also called *falaafil* in Alexandria, is one of the most popular street foods in the Middle East. It may be served as part of a main meal in the evening, or eaten as a snack.

2 cups broken broad beans/fava (*ful madshoosh*) or a mix of *ful* and chickpeas (garbanzos)
½ cup parsley, minced (if using food processor, herbs need only rough chopping)
¼ cup cilantro, minced
¼ cup dill, minced
1 cup green onions (with the white part), minced
½ cup onion, minced
2 TBS garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp baking soda
oil for deep-frying
lightly toasted sesame seeds for garnish

The Day Before

Place the beans in a large bowl of water and rinse several times until the water is clear. Fill the bowl with at least 6 cups of water, cover and allow to soak for a day.

On the Day

Drain the beans and grind very fine. If using a food processor, start with a bit of water in the processor bowl, then gradually add beans through the tube onto the moving blade. Transfer the beans to a bowl and set aside.
Process the herbs, onions, and garlic until smooth.
Return the beans to the processor and blend thoroughly with the herbs.
Transfer the mixture to a bowl, add the spices and baking soda, and mix well.
Cover the bowl and allow to rest for at least 30 minutes. The longer the better, so the flavors blend.
Heat the oil to a medium heat (about 280°F).
To shape the patties, take a large soupspoon and fill the bowl of the spoon with some of the mixture, pressing it firmly into the spoon (piston-shaped *ta'amiya*-makers can be found in some Middle Eastern stores).
Push the batter off with another spoon into the hot oil. Fry several patties at a time, but do not crowd the pan.
Fry for 2 to 3 minutes, or until patties turn golden brown. Turn the patties over and cook again for 2 to 3 minutes or until brown on other side.
Remove and drain on a paper towel or wire rack.
Scatter some sesame seeds to garnish the patties.
Eat in a pocket of pita bread with a salad, or add to *ful medames*, or eat on their own as a snack.

Meat Omelet (Eggah bi Lahma)

Unlike a Western fluffy omelet, eggah is a firm "cake" and is very slowly and gently cooked until completely cooked through. Eggah is also made with vegetables such as zucchini or eggplant, lamb, or other meat, and is equally good hot or cold (it makes a good picnic food).

4 TBS clarified butter or olive oil
¾ pound cooked chicken or turkey, chopped fine or shredded
1 small onion, minced
2 TBS flour
6 eggs, beaten
1 clove garlic, minced
2 TBS fresh parsley, minced
salt, pepper to taste

Heat 2 TBS butter in a heavy pan, and brown the chicken and onion. Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl.
Add the flour to the chicken and onion mixture.
Add and mix in thoroughly the beaten eggs, garlic, pepper, parsley, and salt.
Heat remaining butter in the same pan. Pour in the egg mixture.

(*continued*)

Cook covered over low heat until browned underneath, about 20–30 minutes.
Brown under a hot grill for a few minutes.
Serve hot or cold, sliced into wedges or squares.

Pigeon (Kolbasti)

Pigeons are a traditional dish in Egypt, and most farmsteads, and even many urban households will raise pigeons for the pot.

3 pigeons (or substitute Cornish game hens) split along the backbone
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
3 TBS olive oil
juice from 1 small lemon
½ onion, minced fine and squeezed for juice
¼ tsp cumin powder

Pound each piece of bird flat with a kitchen mallet or the side of your cleaver.
Rub birds all over with the salt, pepper, oil, and lemon and onion juices.
Sprinkle lightly with cumin. Let birds stand for at least 30 minutes.
Grill (preferably over hot coals in a barbecue) for 10–12 minutes, or until just done.
(Do not overcook as they will become dry.)
Serve with rice and a salad.

Baked Rice with Chicken Livers (Tagin Orz)

Rice is a preferred staple, and the richness of the chicken livers adds to the dish, which is served as a central dish in the major meal of the day.

4 TBS (or more) olive oil
1 onion, chopped
½ pound chicken livers, patted dry with paper towels
⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¾ pound rice
¾ pint chicken broth or 1 chicken stock cube dissolved in ¾ pint water
salt to taste

Heat ½ the oil over medium heat in a heavy pan. Sauté onion until golden. Transfer onion to a baking dish, and set aside.
Fry the livers in the same pan, adding more oil if needed. Sprinkle with pepper, reduce heat, and cook, covered, until brown, about 10–15 minutes.
Transfer livers to baking dish.
In the same frying pan over medium heat, quickly fry the rice until each grain is well coated with oil.
Stir in stock and salt, and bring to a boil.

Remove from heat.
Add rice and stock to the liver and onions in the baking dish. Mix well.
Cover and bake for 20 minutes in a preheated oven at 350°F, or until rice is tender.
Uncover during the last 5 minutes to brown.
Serve as a main dish.

Shortbread Biscuits (Grabie)

These are eaten as snacks together with water or tea or coffee.

½ pound unsalted butter
5 ounces confectioners' sugar
½ pound plain flour or ground almonds
hazelnuts, pistachios, or pine nuts, chopped

Cream the butter until light. Add the sugar gradually and cream thoroughly.
Gently mix in the flour to make a soft dough. (If too soft, add just a bit more flour.)
Roll the dough about ½-inch thick on a lightly floured surface.
Cut into 3-inch strips, sprinkle with chopped nuts, and place well spaced on baking sheets.
(An alternative is to make cherry-sized balls, press the bottom flat on the baking sheet and decorate with a whole pistachio, hazelnut, or pine nut pressed in the middle.)
Bake for about 25 minutes in a slow oven (300°F).
The cookies must not color at all. Leave to cool thoroughly on the baking sheets. Makes about 36.

Ali's Mom (Umm 'Ali)

Who Ali's mom was, no one seems to know for sure. This is however the classic Egyptian dessert, with many individual and local variations.

1 package (about 10 ounces) frozen puff pastry, defrosted
½ cup almonds, chopped
¼ cup hazelnuts, chopped
½ cup seedless raisins
½ cup grated coconut
2 TBS sugar
1 cup milk
½ cup cream, whipped

Preheat oven to 400°F.
Place puff pastry flat on a baking sheet and bake until brown and puffy.
Allow pastry to cool. Break into bite-sized pieces and place in a bowl.

(*continued*)

Add nuts, raisins, and coconut and mix thoroughly.
Put in a 10×12-inch baking dish.
Combine sugar and milk in a small pot, and bring to a boil. Pour over the pastry, nut, and raisin mixture.
Top with the cream.
Bake for 25 minutes at 400°F, until top is browned (if not brown by that time, broil under the grill for 1–2 minutes).
Remove from oven, allow to cool to room temperature. Serve with coffee or tea.

EL SALVADOR

El Salvador is a Central American country bordered by Honduras and Guatemala. The country is tropical, and most tropical fruits and vegetables are raised and consumed, including bananas and pineapples that are raised for export.

The country was occupied by the Spanish between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. After independence it was ruled by a succession of dictators and military governments, though it has recently become more democratic. Most of the population are of mixed Spanish and Amerindian ancestry, with a mix of descendants of African slaves.

The food combines Spanish, Amerindian, and African elements with local variations.

Foodstuffs

- Rice, beans, corn, plantains, potatoes, cassava.
- Chicken, pork, beef, fish, and shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster), dairy products (cheese, cream).
- Cabbage, pumpkin, zucchini, *chayote* (a pear-shaped gourd also known as christophene); unusual vegetables: date palm blossom (*pacaya*—especially eaten on All Saints' Day and Holy Week); the flowers of *izote* (*Yucca elephantipes*), the national flower.
- Fruits: mango, watermelon, Salvadoran plums (*jocote*), yellow cherries (*nance*),
- Seasonings: flower buds of *loroco* vine; cumin, oregano, thyme, cinnamon, allspice, pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Staples: rice, beans, corn tortillas (round, flat bread) and tamales (corn dumplings wrapped in banana leaves).
- *Pupusa* is the most distinctive Salvadoran dish: a soft corn or wheat tortilla stuffed with fresh white cheese, pork crackling, beans, carrots, cream, and other fillings. A local flower called *loroco* usually accompanies the cheese filling. This is eaten with pickled cabbage (*curtido*) and a tomato sauce (*salsa roja*).
- Roast chicken (*pollo dorado*) or roast meat, usually beef (*carne asada*).
- Spanish-style stews of chicken or meat with vegetables (*pollo* or *carne encebollado*); of tripe and internal meats (*fritada*).

IZOTE FLOWER
(YUCCA ELEPHANTIPES)

- Fish and seafood stew with lobster, crab, shrimp (*mariscada*).
- Spanish-style savory-filled, crescent-shaped pastry (*pastel*): eaten for special occasions and gatherings such as weddings, funerals, parties.
- Desserts: milk-based custard (*flan*); sweetened popcorn (*alboroto*); sweet cornmeal drink with cinnamon-flavored cassava or plantain fritters (*chilate con nuegados*).
- Drinks: coffee; hot chocolate; fresh tropical fruit juices with or without milk (*licuados* and *refrescos*); cinnamon-flavored milk and barley or rice drinks (*horchata* and *cebada*); locally brewed beer and rum.

Styles of Eating

- Salvadorans eat three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast in rural areas: eggs with tomato sauce, fried green plantain, fried beans and rice (*casamiento*), white cheese or cream, coffee and corn flour tortillas.
- Lunch is the largest meal of the day. The menu may include soup, rice and beans, steak or chicken, salad, and tropical fruits such as mangoes or watermelon.
- Dinner is similar to lunch though with smaller portions or fewer dishes: usually beans and rice, a meat or seafood dish and fruit.
- Snacks: *pupusa*; other savory pastries such as *pastel* or *empanada*; fried green plantains.

Garlic Sausage Soup (Sopa de Chorizo)

This soup is usually eaten with warm tortillas, with slices of lemon and, for those who like added spiciness, fresh hot pepper. A glass of cinnamon-flavored *horchata* (milk and barley or corn drink) is another popular accompaniment.

1 TBS oil
2 medium garlic sausages (chorizo or other spicy sausage), thinly sliced crosswise
1 onion, chopped
3 tomatoes, finely chopped
6 cups water
beef or chicken stock cube
salt and pepper to taste
3 eggs, beaten
2 TBS chopped cilantro or parsley
1 lemon, cut into eight pieces

Heat the oil in a saucepan and fry the sausage with the onion and tomatoes until the vegetables are soft.
Add water and the stock cube.
When the water boils, check the seasoning (as the sausage and stock cube are salty), adding salt, if needed, and pepper.
Stir in beaten eggs and turn off heat.

To serve, garnish with cilantro or parsley.
Diners help themselves to slices of lemon to squeeze into the soup.

Chicken Tomato Stew (Pollo Entomatado)

This flavorful and aromatic chicken stew is eaten for lunch or supper, as an accompaniment to rice and beans. Pickled cabbage and carrots (*curtido*) or a minty tomato and onion salad (*chirimol*) is usually served alongside.

4 large chicken pieces, quarters or legs
1 tsp salt
lemon juice
1 tsp achiote paste or paprika
½ tsp cumin
1 tsp oregano
5 garlic cloves, minced
¼ cup vinegar
¼ cup oil for frying
2 onions, sliced fine
5 large ripe tomatoes, peeled and seeded

Rub chicken thoroughly with salt and lemon juice.
In a bowl, combine achiote, cumin, oregano, garlic, and vinegar.
Coat chicken pieces well with the marinade, and set aside for 2 hours or overnight, covered in the refrigerator.
Heat oil in a heavy saucepan.
Drain the chicken pieces, wipe dry with paper towels, and fry until browned. Pour off the oil.
Place 2 pieces of chicken at the bottom of the pan, add half of the onions and half of the tomatoes. Top with remaining chicken, onions, and tomatoes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Cover and simmer for 1 hour or until tender.

Pickled Cabbage (Curtido)

This pickled slaw is an accompaniment to *pupusas* and other fried dishes.

1 small head cabbage, shredded
1 small red onion, sliced fine
1 carrot, peeled and sliced into thin circles
1 tsp minced garlic
¾ cup white vinegar
salt and black pepper

Combine all ingredients, mixing well. Place in a covered container and refrigerate overnight, stirring once or twice.
Use the following day.
This will keep for about a week stored in the refrigerator.

Cheese Cake (Quesadilla)

This cheese cake or bread with its intriguing sweet and savory taste is typically served for Sunday dessert, and is also served with coffee. There are many variations on this cake, some substituting salty white cheese for the sour cream.

1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 cup sour cream
½ cup parmesan cheese, grated
5 TBS sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light.
Add eggs one at a time, blending well after each addition.
Combine flour with baking powder. Blend into butter mixture.
Stir in sour cream and cheese.
Spread mixture on a greased 1-quart baking dish. Top with sesame seeds.
Bake for 40 to 60 minutes or until it tests done.

Savory Pastries (Pupusa)

This is a common snack for between meals, accompanied by *curtido*.

2 TBS oil
½ pound ground turkey, chicken, pork, or beef
1 medium onion, chopped fine
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small tomato, chopped fine
½ tsp cumin powder
1 cup firm white cheese, grated
½ tsp salt
2½ cups flour (or preferably *masa harina*, prepared cornmeal)
water, about 2 cups
1–2 TBS vegetable oil

Filling

In a large saucepan, heat the oil over high heat and sauté the turkey, onion, and garlic until cooked through.
Lower heat and add the tomato and cumin.
Cook, stirring occasionally until all liquid has evaporated.
Take off heat and cool. Stir in cheese and salt.

Pupusa Wrapper

Mix flour and water in a large mixing bowl to a soft dough.
Divide dough into 8 pieces; roll each into a ball.
Make a cavity in the center of the ball and fill with a spoonful of the filling mixture.
Close the cavity by pressing the dough edges firmly together.

On a lightly floured surface or between a sheet of plastic wrap, carefully roll out the filled balls with a rolling pin until they are ½-inch thick.
To cook, heat a heavy-bottomed skillet until it is very hot.
Rub a little oil over the surface.
Place the *pupusas* and cook each side for 4 to 5 minutes, or until browned.
Serve at once.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

A Western African country on the Eastern shores of the Atlantic Ocean, Equatorial Guinea was once a Portuguese colony. It includes the mainland, and a few islands in the Atlantic. Unequal distribution of wealth and other problems brought about a lengthy civil war after independence, which further weakened the country. It is largely covered by forests on the mainland. The climate is tropical, and staples such as cassava and yams are raised.

The country is populated by many ethnic groups. It is dominated by the Fang, who are also the most numerous group.

The cooking is based on staple porridge eaten with vegetable-based sauces with or without meat or fish.

Foodstuffs

- The chief staple is *gari*, a flour made from cassava. Plantains and yams are a common mainstay, and plantain leaves are additionally useful as cooking (for wrapping foods) and eating (as "plates") utensils.
- The forest also provides meat—small animals, snails, insects—mushrooms, and greens.
- The mainland Fang people have traditionally relied on the meat of hunted forest animals and on river crayfish and other crustaceans.

SWEET POTATO LEAVES

Typical Dishes

- The Fang cook *gari* into a thick porridge and eat it with a spicy sauce made from a variety of such local ingredients as crushed gourd seeds, leaves, and insects.
- In the cities, beef and chicken are prepared on skewers, cooked over an open fire, and served with rice and spicy sauce.
- Greens are cooked with peanut sauce, and, if possible, meat or fish or crustaceans.
- Millet beer, palm wine and sugar cane juice are common local drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Most people try to eat three times a day, but in reality, poorer sections of the population rarely eat more than twice: in the morning and evening.
- Snacks such as peanuts are often eaten, as well as forest products ranging from fruits through to the leaves of wild yams.

Cooked Greens (Maffi Hakko)

Forest people tend to exploit every available food source, and the Guineans are no exception. Virtually any kind of strong greens will do for this dish. Sweet potato leaves are available from Southeast Asian specialty groceries.

½ cup palm oil or vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 pound sweet potato leaves (or other strong greens such as kale), chopped fine
water to cover
1 cube soup stock (beef or vegetable)
½ cup dried, pounded meat (or substitute ecooked beef, pounded well with a meat mallet)
salt and chili or cayenne pepper, to taste

Heat the oil. Sauté the onion until softened.
Add leaves to the pot a handful at a time, stirring and letting each handful cook down before adding the next.
Pour in enough water (1–2 cups) to just cover the leaves.
Stir in crushed stock cube and meat. Bring to a boil.
Taste and add salt, if needed, chili or cayenne.
Reduce heat and simmer until leaves are tender, stirring often, about 5–10 minutes (about 20 minutes for kale).
Serve over rice or *gari*.

Millet Porridge (Fura Gero)

This dish is eaten as a staple by people in the dryer inland areas.

5 ounces millet flour (available from specialty or health food stores)
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp fresh grated or powdered ginger
2 cups (or more) water
l cup milk
1 cinnamon stick
sugar to taste

(*continued*)

Combine millet flour, salt, pepper, and ginger in a bowl.
Gradually stir in 1 cup water to make a smooth, lump-free paste, adding a bit more if needed.
Knead to a smooth paste. Add water if necessary.
Combine 1 cup water with the milk in a saucepan, and heat just until bubbles form on the sides.
Slowly add the scalded milk mixture to the millet paste, stirring constantly until smoothly incorporated.
Transfer the millet and milk mixture to the saucepan. Add cinnamon.
Simmer, stirring constantly, until thick.
Add salt and sugar to taste.
Serve for breakfast or supper.

Cooked Okra (Sauce Gombo)

This dish, or something like it from the west coast of Africa, is quite possibly the ancestor of the Louisiana gumbo. It is served as a sauce for the staple in a main meal.

3 TBS palm or other oil
2 medium onions, chopped
4 cups okra, diced
water, as needed
1 stock cube, crushed
1 TBS curry powder
salt, pepper, and chili pepper to taste

Heat oil over medium heat and sauté onions until softened.
Add chili pepper to taste, stir. Do not allow chili to burn.
Stir in okra and add water to cover.
Stir in stock cube, curry powder, salt, and pepper.
Simmer until thickened, about 10 minutes.
Serve over *gari*.

Fish in Tomato Sauce (Peixe a Tomate)

From its name, this dish is of Portuguese origin. Fish, stuffed with onions and peppers and fried are popular along the coast.

1 whole fish (½ pound per serving), scaled and cleaned (head and tail left intact)
2 onions, chopped
¼ cup oil
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
salt and chili pepper to taste

Sprinkle salt and pepper inside the fish, and stuff the cavity with ¼ of the onions.
Heat the oil over medium heat in a frying pan, and gently brown the fish on both sides (about 5 minutes on each side).
Remove fish and set aside. Pour off oil, leaving about 2 TBS in the pan.
Stir in onions and fry until softened.
Add tomatoes, peppers, and chili, and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.
Add fish, basting well with the vegetable sauce, and simmer, covered, for 10 or more minutes, or until done and fish flakes easily.
Serve with *bâton de manioc* /*chikwangue* or *fufu* and *piri-piri* sauce on the side.

Fried Plantain (Loco)

Fried plantains are eaten at any time of the day, including as breakfast, or as a snack.

5 TBS palm or other oil
3 plantains (or 4 very green bananas), peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces.
1 onion, chopped
1 cube soup stock, chicken or beef, crumbled

In a frying pan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat and sauté onions until golden. Remove and reserve.
Add remaining oil, and when hot, sauté plantains until brown, about 15 minutes.
Add reserved onions and sprinkle with crumbled soup stock,
Serve on its own or with any meat or fish dish.

ERITREA

Eritrea is a largely desert country on the shores of the Red Sea between Ethiopia and Sudan. The climate is largely hot and dry. The countryside tends to be harsh, with rocky mountains rising out of dry plains. On and off part of the Ethiopian empire, it later became an Italian colony, then a part of Ethiopia, from which it became independent after a protracted war. Eritrean language and customs are very similar to those of their Ethiopian neighbors.

Parts of Eritrea are very fertile and produce good crops of cereals, vegetables, and fruit. Fish are caught in the Red Sea, though because few Eritreans actually eat fish, are mostly exported.

Most Eritreans are Coptic Christians, though a very large minority are Muslims. Neither eat pork. The great festival of the year is Easter for the Christians, Eid-al-Fitr for the Muslims. When neighbors from different religious communities participate in festivals—a wedding, a birth—the host will provide those from the other community with the raw materials for them to prepare the food according to their religious strictures.

Foodstuffs

- *Tef* is the most desired grain. Sorghum and wheat are also eaten as a substitute.
- Lentils and chickpeas are very important.
- The preferred meat is beef. Pork is not eaten (or very rarely). Chicken and other poultry are eaten as well, since they are raised by many households.
- Milk products, notably butter, buttermilk, and soft cheeses are a mainstay. Herbed butter is used as a flavoring agent.
- Eritrean foods tend to be very peppery, and Eritreans consume vast amounts of chili peppers.
- *Berberé* (a spice mix), chili powder, and other spices are used to spice almost all dishes.

Typical Dishes

- The two staples are *sarekitcha*, which is a very thin, baked, unleavened wheat bread and *injera*, a spongy pancake made from *tef* (see box "Tef"), wheat and/or barley, maize or sorghum.
- *Zigni*, long-simmered stews made from whatever is available (meat or fish, vegetables or a combination of the two).

- *Tsebhi* or *qkoolewaa* is a meat sauté prepared with lamb or beef, fresh tomatoes and hot peppers.
- *Shiro*, chickpea porridge, is made in many different ways and serves as the meat of the poor, with their *injera*.
- *Alitcha birsen*, a lentil curry.
- Beer (called *suwa* and made of barley), mead (honey beer called *mies*), and *zebib*, a locally made anise-flavored liquor similar to ouzo. Tea and particularly coffee, always served highly sweetened, are drunk at every social occasion. Local fruit juices are very popular in the large cities.

TEF

The major staple of the Amharic, Tigrean, and Eritrean people in the Horn of Africa, it is a highland grain related to millets. *Tef* is one of the smallest grains in the world, one grain measuring only about $^1/_{32}$-inch in diameter. Approximately 150 grains equal the size of a kernel of wheat. Highly nutritious, *tef* has excellent amino acid composition and lysine levels. One cup of cooked *tef* contains 100 percent of the USRDA iron requirement. *Tef* is also high in protein and fiber and is a rich source of boron, copper, phosphorus, and zinc. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, *tef* is ground into flour, fermented, and made into *injera*, a large, thin pancake or crepe that is the local staple. *Tef* is also eaten as porridge and, more rarely, as an ingredient of homebrewed beer.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day are common: breakfast and an evening meal.
- Before eating, one of the women of the household will bring a basin of water to wash the hands. Most food is served on a communal basketwork raised tray called a *mesob*. Several diners share one *mesob*. Several layers of *injera* are put on the *mesob* and the stew mounded on the injera. Diners break off bits of *injera* and scoop up the stew. Only the right hand is used, and licking one's fingers or even touching them to one's lips is considered impolite.
- Breakfast is generally lighter than dinner, and often is little more than some *injera* and coffee.
- Lunch is often a snack, or some leftovers from breakfast.
- Coffee breaks are very important during the day, and coffee service (*buna*) is a major social ritual (see box "Coffee Ritual").

Fermented Pancake (Injera)

This is an Eritrean recipe for *injera*. It can be used for Ethiopian meals as well.

7 ounces *tef*, ground fine (or 2 ounces fine cornmeal and 5 ounces self-rising flour)
1 cup lukewarm water
½ cup soda water (seltzer, or dissolve 1 tsp baking soda in ½ cup water)
1 tsp salt
vegetable oil

3 Days Before

Mix flour with water and let stand in a bowl, covered with a damp, clean dishtowel, at room temperature, until it bubbles and has turned sour. This may take as long as 3 days. The fermenting mixture should be the consistency of pancake batter.

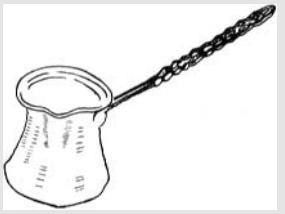
(*continued*)

COFFEE RITUAL

The coffee bean originated in the Ethiopian highlands, though besides legends, there is little knowledge of how it was domesticated. Originally the fruit, and then the bean, were chewed for the caffeine effect. Later it was discovered that the dried, toasted seed could be ground and brewed into the coffee we know today. There are several subspecies of coffee, though only two—*arabica* and *robusta*—are grown commercially outside the Horn of Africa.

Preparing and drinking coffee is a major institution throughout the Middle East and northern Africa. In the Horn of Africa, where it originates, coffee, called *bun* (pronounced *boon*) or *buna* is almost always drunk in three sequential cups offered to guests with pauses in between. Special rules, which vary from one group to another, apply: it must be (or must not be) prepared by a woman, the water must be fresh (or kept overnight), and so on. Coffee making is something of an art, and its preparation—selecting the beans, toasting them in a special pan, pounding them, boiling the water, infusing the coffee—is often a public spectacle.

In the Middle East and northern Africa, the roasted, pounded beans are poured into a special pot called a *jebena* (also *jibneh*). Water is added to it and the coffee brought to a boil over a brazier. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, it is considered shameful to let the coffee boil over. In other areas such as Libya, the coffee is allowed to froth up several times (without, of course, spilling) before it is considered fit to drink. Turkish and Ethiopian coffee are served sweetened with sugar. Most Arabian drinkers, drinking from tiny elaborate porcelain cups (*finjal*), drink the coffee bitter.



JIBNEH COFFEE POT

It is considered proper to compliment the service, the aroma and taste of the coffee, and the water from which it has been made. In Turkey, the Levant, and many Arab countries, coffee is almost always accompanied by sweet pastries, and in the Horn of Africa by popcorn or some similar snack.

On the Day

Add soda water and stir in salt.
Lightly oil a 10-inch frying pan or rimless crepe pan. Heat to medium heat.
Pour ⅓ cup batter onto pan and tilt pan to spread the batter. *Injera* should be thicker than a crepe but thinner than a pancake when cooked (it will puff up a bit as it cooks).
Cover pan and cook until holes form in the cake, the top is dry, and the edges lift from the pan.
Remove and let cool.
To serve the injera: place 2–3 layers of *injera* onto a flat plate or tray and lay on a *mesob* or basketwork tray. On the side, place the remaining injera folded into quarters, or rolled up. Arrange spoonfuls of the accompanying stew or other dishes on the spread out injera.

Spice Mix (Eritrean Berberé)

This is a spice mixture that is essential for most Eritrean cooking. The proportions of each spice will vary with each family.

5 dried chili peppers, crumbled
2 cloves
1 TBS sweet or hot paprika
½ tsp salt
½ tsp cumin seeds
¼ tsp fenugreek seeds
¼ tsp coriander seeds
¼ tsp black pepper corns
¼ tsp turmeric powder
¼ tsp cardamom seeds (scraped from the pod)
⅛ tsp dried ginger powder
⅛ tsp cinnamon powder
⅛ tsp whole allspice

Put all the ingredients except the salt in a frying pan and gently heat for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly until aromatic. Be careful not to scorch the spices.
Remove from heat immediately and stir in the salt.
Process in a food processor until all are finely ground and well blended.
The *berberé* will keep in an airtight jar in the refrigerator for several months.

Herb Butter (Tegele Setesmi)

This clarified butter is used to cook and flavor spicy dishes. Like ghee, *tegele setesmi* will keep for several months without refrigeration.

½ pound unsalted butter
½ cup water
2 small onions, very finely sliced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tsp ginger, grated

Combine the butter and water in a frying pan over low heat until the butter melts.
Add the other ingredients and simmer for 30 minutes, until the mixture stops frothing, and the butter is clear.
Do *not* stir the mixture.
Sieve the mixture and allow to cool down in a well-sealed jar.
Use on *injera* or for cooking.

Peanut Sauce (Tsebhi Shiro)

"Tsebhi" means sauce, and chicken and beef are the most popular. However, for most Eritreans these are reserved for special occasions, and peanut or other vegetable-based sauces are daily accompaniments to injera.

1 pound raw, dry peanuts, shelled and skins removed
½ cup butter or clarified butter
2 TBS tomato paste
2 small onions, chopped
2 tsp *berberé*
salt and pepper to taste

(*continued*)

In a food processor, grind peanuts into flour (be careful not to grind into peanut butter).
Put with the other ingredients into a saucepan with 2 cups of water and bring to a boil.
Simmer for 30 minutes until thickened.
Serve on *injera*.

Lentil Stew (Tsebhi Birsen)

Though Eritreans adore beef and other meats, most cannot afford them, and so must substitute other forms of protein such as lentils.

2 TBS clarified butter or oil
1 large onion, minced
2 tsp *berberé*
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
2 tsp tomato paste
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp cardamom powder
3 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup red lentils, washed and drained
2 cups (or more) boiling water

Heat butter in a frying pan and fry the onion until light golden.
Add the *berberé* and fry for 2 minutes.
Add the tomatoes and tomato paste and simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in the cumin, cardamom, and garlic, and simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in the salt, pepper, lentils, and boiling water.
Cover the pan and simmer for about 20–30 minutes, or until lentils are tender but not mushy.
Add about ¼ cup more boiling water during cooking if the lentils have absorbed most of the water and are still not done.
Serve on *injera*.

Spicy Chicken (Tsebhi Derho)

Chicken often substitutes for beef in many households as part of the main meal. You may use 1½ pounds beef or lamb (shredded or ground) instead of the chicken, in which case this dish is called *tsebhi zegni or tsebhi sega.*

4 large portions chicken
2 TBS lemon juice
2 onions, chopped
¼ cup *berberé*
¼ cup *tegele setesmi* (herb butter)
2 TBS tomato paste
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 tsp garlic, minced
1 tsp fresh grated ginger
½ cup water
4 hard-boiled eggs (shelled)
salt and pepper to taste

Rub the chicken pieces with the lemon juice and salt and leave to marinate for 30 minutes.
Over low heat, dry fry the onions in a frying pan (add 1 tablespoon water if needed to prevent burning).
When the onions are done, add the *berberé* and heat until warm, about 2 minutes.
Add the *tegele setesmi* and fry the mixture, stirring, for 5 minutes.
Add the tomato paste, tomatoes, garlic, ginger, and pepper and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring regularly to prevent sticking.
Add the chicken and some water if necessary if the sauce is too thick.
Simmer for 20–25 minutes, or until the chicken is done.
Taste and adjust seasoning. Add the eggs and simmer until warmed through.
Serve on *injera*.

Sweet Bread **(Hembesha)**

This is a snack bread, often served during a coffee break.

1 ounce fresh yeast
1 cup lukewarm milk
2 ounces sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp cumin powder
1 pound flour
½ cup butter, melted, plus extra for brushing
1 tsp salt
4 ounces seedless raisins, soaked in water to moisten

Sprinkle the yeast over the milk and sugar in a food processor bowl.
Add the eggs and cumin and mix well.
Add the flour, butter, and salt. Process just until mixture forms a dough.
Remove dough and knead for 10 minutes on a lightly floured surface.
Knead in raisins for about 1 minute.
Cover with a damp kitchen towel and allow the dough to rise in a warm place until doubled in size.
Punch down, knead for about 5 minutes, and fit into a buttered 12-inch round spring-form baking pan.
Allow the dough to rise again until doubled.
Make some decorative patterns with a fork or knife on the dough.
Bake for 10 minutes in a preheated medium oven.
Turn over and bake for another 5 minutes.
Remove bread from the baking pan and brush the top with melted butter.
Serve warm or cold in wedges.

ESTONIA

Estonia is one of the three small Baltic republics that until recently, were part of the Soviet empire, and is about 1½ times the size of New Hampshire. The climate is cool to cold in the winter. Much of the country is flat, and covered with forests and small lakes.

Most of the population is Estonian, speaking a language similar to, but very distinct from Lithuanian and Latvian. There is a substantial Russian minority.

The diet of people in Estonia is similar to that of neighboring Latvia and Lithuania. Due to long Russian domination, Russian foods and cooking styles have entered the cuisine as well.

Foodstuffs

- Rye, barley, and potatoes are staples.
- Pork is the favored meat.
- Fish is very important, particularly herring.
- Forest products including honey, berries, and various mushrooms are traditional favorites.
- Butter and milk products are used as well.

Typical Dishes

- Black, leavened rye bread is a traditional staple, and is eaten with most meals.
- The main dish in a common Estonian's meal is potatoes. The main course can be a variety of meats like beef, pork, chicken, sausage, or fish. Estonians have somewhat of a sweet tooth and enjoy sweets, especially chocolate.
- Beer and small-beer (*kvass*) have been the traditional beverages for all occasions.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are eaten.
- Modern dining is European standard.
- Breakfast is usually some form of porridge, often savory, eaten with whatever else is available, for example, eggs, cheese. Tea, coffee, or milk to drink.
- Lunch can be very heavy, including soup, a meat dish, potatoes or cabbage, and a sweet.

- Dinner is much like the midday meal, but often much lighter with only one dish.
- Snacks are eaten, often drunk with plentiful hot tea sweetened with sugar, honey, or jam.

Beef and Cabbage (Hakkliha Ja Kapsa Pajatoit)

Beef and cabbage are mainstays of the diet along with potatoes. This would be served for lunch.

1 pound ground beef or turkey
2 TBS butter
1 medium cabbage, cut into large strips
1 onion, sliced into rings
3 carrots, peeled and sliced in rounds
2 potatoes, sliced into ¼-inch rounds
2 cups beef stock
salt, paprika, and marjoram to taste

Brown the beef quickly in butter.
Alternate layers of vegetables with the beef in a heavy pot.
Sprinkle each layer with salt, paprika, and marjoram.
Pour the beef stock over the vegetables.
Cover and simmer over low heat for 1½ hours.
Serve with boiled potatoes.

Cucumber and Sour Cream Salad (Agurkai Su Rukcscia Grietne)

Salads are eaten with all main meals, and cucumber with sour cream is particularly relished in the summer.

4 small cucumbers (or gherkins), peeled, halved, seeded, and sliced ½-inch thick
1 TBS coarse salt
3 tsp white vinegar
3 hard-boiled eggs, peeled, whites and yolks separated
1 tsp mustard
⅓ cup sour cream
¼ tsp sugar
salt and white pepper to taste
4 large lettuce leaves, washed and dried
1 TBS fresh dill, minced finely

Combine cucumber slices, salt, and ½ teaspoon vinegar, and toss until cucumber is well moistened. Marinate at room temperature for 20 minutes. Drain and pat dry with paper towels. Return to clean bowl.
Cut egg whites into strips and stir into cucumber.
Prepare dressing: mash egg yolks to a paste in a separate bowl, and combine with mustard, sour cream, remaining vinegar, sugar, salt, and pepper.

(*continued*)

Pour dressing over cucumbers and toss gently so as not to break egg whites.
Season to taste.
Place lettuce leaves on small individual plates, and arrange salad on top.
Sprinkle with dill. Serve chilled.

Fried Potato Patties (Bulviu Maltiniai)

These fried potato patties are served with festive foods.

1½ pounds potatoes, peeled, boiled, and mashed
2 eggs
½ cup flour
1 tsp salt
4 TBS (or more) butter for frying

In a food processor, combine mashed potatoes, eggs, flour, and salt until smooth and firm enough to shape (if not, beat in more flour, one TBS at a time).
Remove potato mixture to a well-floured surface, and pat into a 1-inch-thick rectangle.
With a sharp knife, cut the dough diagonally into lozenges (diamonds) 2 inches wide and 2½ inches long.
With a fork, score the top of each lozenge with wavy lines.
Melt 2 TBS butter in a heavy 12-inch skillet over high heat.
Brown patties gently on both sides.
Transfer patties to a warmed serving plate and keep warm while frying the rest of the patties.

Red Cabbage with Sour Cream Sauce (Porskinti Raudoni Kapustai)

This is a popular side dish to accompany meat or poultry for the main meal.

1½ pounds red cabbage, cored and coarsely shredded
¼ cup onions, coarsely chopped
1 tsp garlic, finely chopped
1 TBS tomato paste
1½ cup cold water
salt to taste
6 TBS butter, cut into small pieces
3 TBS lemon juice, strained
1 TBS sour cream

Combine cabbage, onions, and garlic in a saucepan.
Mix tomato paste and water, and stir into the cabbage.
Add salt and butter.
Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly.
Reduce the heat, cover and simmer until the cabbage is tender (30–40 minutes).

Remove from the heat. Stir in lemon juice, sour cream, and correct seasoning.
Serve with a meat dish.

Fried Herring in Onion Sauce (Silke Cepts Ar Sipoli Merce)

Herring is an important item of diet and can be eaten with any meal.

4 fillets of schmaltz herring (available from most Jewish delis, or substitute pickled herring), patted dry with paper towels
½ cup flour
1 TBS vegetable oil
2 TBS butter
6 TBS onions, finely chopped
½ tsp flour
1 tsp prepared mustard
¼ cup sour cream
salt and pepper to taste
½ tsp lemon juice

Coat herring fillets well with flour. Shake off excess.
In a heavy 12-inch skillet, heat oil over high heat.
Brown herrings gently on both sides, and transfer to a serving plate. Cover loosely with foil and keep warm.
Prepare the sauce: in same pan, melt butter over moderate heat.
Sauté the chopped onions until softened.
Reduce heat, and stir in the flour, mustard, sour cream, salt, and black pepper, whisking constantly, until sauce thickens, about 2 minutes.
Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice, taste, and adjust seasoning.
Spread a layer of sauce on a serving plate and top with the herring.

Raspberry Pastries (Aleksander Torte)

Named for Russian Tsar Alexsander, this pastry is eaten as an afternoon snack.

½ pound butter, chilled and diced
3½ cups flour
1 TBS sugar
2 eggs, beaten
1½ cups raspberry jam or preserve (with lots of fruit)
2 TBS butter, softened

In a food processor, process butter, flour, sugar, and eggs just until they form a dough.
Remove dough, wrap in a food bag, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
Meanwhile, in a blender or food processor, puree jam.
Cook over medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes until thickened. Set aside.
Preheat oven to 250°F.

(*continued*)

Divide chilled dough in two and shape each half into a rectangle.
Roll each half between two sheets of lightly floured wax paper into a rectangle approximately 10×15 inches.
Butter and flour 2 large cookie sheets.
Peel off the top sheet of wax paper and use the bottom one to lift each pastry rectangle onto a cookie sheet. Discard wax paper.
Bake pastry separately for 10 minutes, or until golden.
Meanwhile, prepare icing.
Remove pastry from oven. Spread evenly with raspberry puree.
Slide second pastry gently onto raspberry-covered layer.
Cover the top piece of pastry with icing, cool, then slice into 1×2-inch rectangles.

White Lemon Icing

3 cups confectioners' sugar
¼ cup cold water
1 tsp lemon juice

Mix the sugar, water, and lemon juice to a thin paste.
Spread smoothly on the top layer of pastry, and allow the cake to cool to room temperature before serving.
Cut into bars to serve.

ETHIOPIA

The only country in Africa that was never really colonized (barring a short Italian occupation in the middle of the twentieth century), Ethiopia boasts a lengthy imperial history. It is landlocked, bordered by Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Kenya. Most of the country is a heavily populated highland with deep gullies between different areas. The south is more humid.

The country is home to many ethnic groups. The two major groups are those speaking Amharic-related languages (a subset of Southern Semitic, including Amharic, Tigréan, Tigrinya, and Eritrean) and those speaking Oromo-related languages, including the many varieties of Oromo and Galla, and Somali. There are also significant representations of other groups.

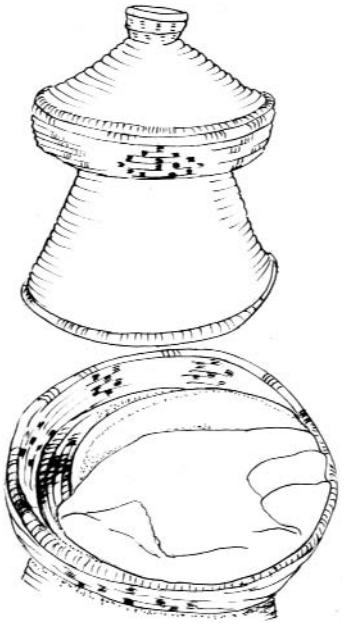
Most Ethiopians are Christians and members of the Coptic Church. There is a significant Muslim population, as well as various African ethnic religions, particularly in the south of the country.

Foodstuffs

- The most prominent foodstuff is *tef*, a relative of the millet, which is unique to Ethiopia and neighboring countries.
- Meat, particularly beef, either cooked or raw, is the most desired food. Other meats include chicken, and in the south of the country, fish.
- Legumes and peanuts.
- Butter and cheese are eaten both in plain form and flavored with herbs.

Typical Dishes

- *Injera*, a spongy, pancake-like bread made from fermenting *tef* into a thick batter then cooking it on a griddle. This is the same as Eritrean *injera*, though there are some regional variations (see "Eritrea" entry for recipe).
- Stews (*wot*) or other dishes are ladled onto the *injera*, which is used to scoop up the food.
- A favorite celebration dish is raw beef, the fresher the better, and cows are sometimes slaughtered right in front of the guests in order to provide the freshest beef. At the very least *kitfo*—raw ground beef—will be offered to conclude the feast.



MESOB BASKET

- Chilies flavor almost every dish. Ethiopian food is almost always highly spiced and very hot. Ethiopian flavoring principles include chili peppers, garlic, and cinnamon.

Styles of Eating

- People traditionally ate twice a day with snacks.
- Diners generally eat around a *mesob*, a wickerwork raised tray with a domed wicker cover to protect food from flies. The *mesob* is covered with several 12–14-inch *injera* pancakes. Stews and other foods are ladled on to the *injera* when the diners are ready. Diners tear off bits of *injera* and roll them into a half-pipe with which they scoop up the stew of their choice.
- In the family, men and women eat together (children may be fed later) though a man may be served with his male guests before the household as a whole eats.
- Breakfast is usually coffee and some fried bread, or leftovers from the previous evening.
- Lunch for working people is usually skimpy, though in towns it might be the main meal.
- The evening meal almost always includes *injera*, meat if possible, or a vegetable stew for the *injera* if meat is not available.
- Food is washed down with *tej* (mead, or honey wine), or *talla* (thick home-brewed barley beer). Coffee is drunk at all times of the day. Called *buna* (boona), it is always served in threes, with long gaps between servings to allow for lengthy conversations. It is served black with sugar.

Spice Mix
(Ethiopian Berberé)

Berberé is a spice mixture that is the flavoring foundation of Ethiopian cuisine. It is made by combining roughly equal amounts of spices with a much larger amount of hot red (chili) pepper. Fenugreek and very hot red pepper are essential to *berberé*. The other spices vary according to personal choice. It is made as a dry spice mix, in which case no oil or fresh ingredients are used, or for immediate use with fresh shallots, garlic, and oil.

½ tsp fenugreek powder
2 TBS mixed cayenne pepper and dried red chili pepper powder
⅛ tsp allspice powder
¼ tsp black pepper, crushed
½ tsp cardamom powder
1/16 tsp (or two pinches) cinnamon powder
1/16 tsp (or two pinches) cloves powder
¼ tsp coriander powder
¼ tsp cumin powder
⅛ tsp turmeric powder

½ TBS salt
½ tsp ginger, fresh (peeled and grated)
1 TBS shallots, finely minced
½ tsp garlic, minced
1½ TBS vegetable oil

Toast the dried spices for a few minutes in a heavy skillet over low heat. Stir continuously to avoid scorching. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
Combine with the salt, fresh ginger, shallots, garlic, and oil.
Process in a food processor.
Use immediately or store for several days in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator (dry *berberé* can be stored for longer).
Use in any Ethiopian recipe for meat or vegetables.

Spiced Legumes (Metin Shuro)

This mixture is used in vegetable stews as a flavoring and as a thickener. The proportions vary according to personal taste. Throughout Ethiopia you can see spread mats with the ingredients drying on them. You can make this in a large quantity as it stores well, like *berberé*.

1 cup dried peas, rinsed
¼ cup lentils, rinsed
¼ cup chickpeas (garbanzos), rinsed
¼ cup pinto beans, rinsed
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and shredded
⅙ cup fresh ginger
⅙ cup garlic, minced
¼ cup red shallots, minced
⅓ tsp rue
⅓ tsp savory
1 tsp fenugreek powder
1 TBS fresh basil
1 cardamom pod
½ tsp cloves
⅓ tsp cumin powder
⅓ tsp cinnamon powder
⅓ tsp black cumin seeds
⅓ tsp coriander powder
⅛ cup salt
⅓ tsp cubeb pepper (*Piper cubeba L.*, sometimes available from specialty spice shops; or substitute white pepper)

Blanch all legumes in boiling water for a few minutes. Drain.
Parch the legumes separately in an oven, then dry in sunlight in a dry breeze for two days (or, if you have a convection oven, leave the door open a crack and keep on lowest heat) until thoroughly parched.
When thoroughly dry, grind separately, then mix flours together.
Mix red pepper, ginger, garlic, red shallots, rue, and savory, and dry outside in the sun, or use dry equivalents.
Mix legume flours with salt, dried herbs, and spices.
Process the whole mixture in a food processor until finely ground.
May be kept indefinitely in a dry place in a sealed jar.
To use, mix a cupful into a vegetable or meat stew.

Spicy Chicken Stew (Doro-wot)

This is a common main dish for the evening meal.

4 large chicken pieces (quarters, breasts, or legs)
juice of 1 lemon
1 level tsp salt
4 cups boiling water
2 ounces butter
3 large onions, chopped
2 TBS chili powder
2 TBS tomato paste
4 TBS water
½ tsp ginger, grated
½ tsp black pepper
6 hard-boiled eggs, shelled, and pierced lightly on the surface with a fork

In a saucepan, place chicken pieces, lemon juice, and salt with boiling water.
Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove chicken to a plate and strain stock into a bowl.
In the same saucepan, melt butter and lightly brown onions.
Stir in 1 pint of the hot chicken stock, chili powder, and tomato paste. Simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in ginger, pepper, another 1 pint hot stock, and the chicken pieces.
Gently simmer until chicken is tender, 30 to 40 minutes.
Add hard-boiled eggs and cook until warmed through, about 5 minutes before serving.
Serve with *injera*.

Vegetable Stew (Aleecha)

Most Ethiopians rarely get to eat meat, except during special occasions, and must eat their *injera* with vegetable stews.

1 cabbage, cut into eighths
½ cup *tegele setesmi* (herb butter, see under Eritrea entry)
2 onions, sliced
1 TBS *berberé*
¼ cup water
4 carrots, peeled and cut in half
1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 cup cauliflower, broken into florets
salt to taste

Boil the cabbage until soft. Drain.
Heat *tegele setesmi* in saucepan and fry onions until softened.
Stir in *berberé* and cook for 1 minute
Add ¼ cup of water, and bring to a boil.
Add carrots and potatoes, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.
Add cauliflower and cabbage, and simmer for 15 minutes.
Taste and correct seasoning.
Serve on *injera*.

Ground Beef with Peppers (Retfo)

Beef is the most highly desired meat for most Ethiopians, though given the high level of poverty, it is not often enjoyed by all. *Kitfo* (spiced, ground raw beef) is often served as dessert, after all other dishes. *Retfo*, which is cooked, makes a reasonable substitute.

1½ ounces butter
1 large onion, chopped
1 medium green bell pepper, diced
1½ pound ground beef
1 dried chili pepper, crushed
1½ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
cooked rice

Heat butter over medium heat, then sauté onion and green pepper until both are softened.
Stir in beef and cook for about 3 minutes.
Mix chilies with salt and pepper, and add to meat mixture. Stir in well. Continue cooking until meat is brown.
Serve with rice for a main meal.

Honey Yeast Bread (Yemarina Yewotet Dabo)

This is often eaten as a snack with cups of hot tea or coffee.

1 package dry yeast
¼ cup lukewarm water
⅛ tsp sugar
1 egg, beaten
⅓ cup honey
1 TBS coriander powder
½ tsp ground cinnamon powder
¼ tsp powdered cloves
1 tsp salt
1 cup lukewarm milk
6 TBS unsalted butter, melted
4 cups all-purpose flour

Sprinkle yeast over warm water and sugar. Let it stand for 3 minutes, then stir to dissolve. Set the bowl in a warm place for about 5 minutes.
In a food processor bowl, combine egg, honey, coriander, cinnamon, cloves, and salt, mixing until smooth.
Blend in the yeast mixture, milk, and 5 tablespoons of the melted butter.
Add the flour and process until the mixture forms a dough.
Remove dough and knead on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.
Place dough in a large greased bowl. Cover with a damp kitchen towel and let sit in warm place for about 1½ hours.
Grease a cookie sheet with the remaining butter.
Punch down the dough and knead it again for a few minutes.
Shape the dough into a round loaf, and place on the baking sheet.

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Preheat oven to 325°F.
Meanwhile, let the bread rise until doubled in size.
Bake the bread for 1 hour, or until the top is crusty and golden.

Chickpea Snacks (Dabo Kolo)

Dabo kolo is a crunchy, spicy snack that looks like peanuts, and is eaten with drinks between meals.

1 cup chickpea (garbanzo) flour
1 cup wheat flour (all-purpose unbleached, or whole wheat), or *tef* flour
2 TBS *berberé* spice mix
1 TBS sugar
1 tsp salt
4 TBS softened butter
½ cup water

In a food processor bowl, combine and mix all the dry ingredients.
Blend in the butter, then slowly add the water to form a firm dough.
Remove the dough and knead it on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes until smooth.
Let the dough rest in a cool place, covered with a damp towel, for 10 minutes.
Divide the dough into fist-size pieces and roll these into long sticks ½-inch thick.
Cut sticks into ½-inch pieces.
Slowly heat a heavy, ungreased skillet.
Place enough of the uncooked *dabo kolo* in the skillet to loosely cover the bottom.
Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned on all sides.
Alternatively, arrange on a buttered and floured baking sheet. Bake in a 350°F oven for about 20 minutes, or until golden.
Allow to cool completely on the baking sheet.
Store in air-tight containers. Serve as a snack with coffee or juice.

FIJI

Fiji consists of over 300 mountainous islands situated in the South Pacific scattered over about 200,000 sq. miles. The climate is warm and moist with little temperature fluctuation throughout the seasons. Many of the islands are rocky, of volcanic origin; others are coral atolls.

A multicultural society of mainly Melanesians and Polynesians, there are large numbers of descendants of Indian (Hindu and Moslem) and Chinese settlers brought in by the colonial power (Britain) to work the sugarcane and fruit plantations.

Fijian cuisine is an example of fusion cooking: a mixture of Melanesian, Polynesian, Indian, Chinese, and Western cuisine.

Foodstuffs

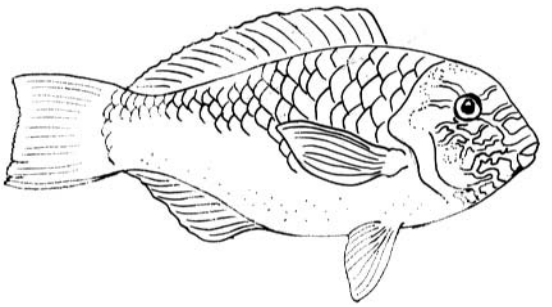
- Staples include breadfruit, yam, cassava, taro tubers (*dalo*) and leaves (*rourou*), and for some of the population, rice.
- Coconut is used in many forms, and coconut milk is part of many dishes.
- Fish and seafood are very important, including tuna and bonito, flying fish, reef fish such as parrotfish, octopus, shellfish.
- Beef, pork, and poultry are eaten, as well as imports such as corned beef. Hindu Indians abstain from beef and Moslem Indians, from pork.
- Fruits, including guava, mango, bananas, and pineapple are popular in both sweet and savory dishes.

Typical Dishes

- Traditional cooking methods included baking in an underground oven called a *lovo*, which was often used to cook whole pigs, chickens, seafood, and root vegetables such as taro.
- Indian-style dishes: roti; curried stews.
- Chinese-style dishes: noodles; stir-fried meat, chicken, or fish and vegetables.
- Major flavoring principles include lime and coconut. Garlic, ginger, turmeric, coriander, fenugreek, cumin, soy sauce, curry powder, and chilies are often used to flavor modern dishes.

Styles of Eating

- Traditionally, people ate two main meals a day, a very early breakfast and a late afternoon heavier meal. Working people and urban people now eat three meals a day and snacks where possible.
- Extended families (including cousins and close relatives), and often entire Fijian clans eat together, men first and women later. In rural areas, food is set on a mat on the floor (shoes are not worn inside the house) and all eat surrounding the food. Most Indians also sit on the floor.
- Traditionally, food was set on banana leaves and eaten with the fingers. Nowadays, Western tableware (plates, knives, forks, and spoons) is used by urbanites and the middle-class who also sit on chairs and tables, but for feasts and large gatherings, banana leaves and fingers are still used.
- A typical Fijian main course consists of a dish of cooked fish or meat, boiled taro leaves and cassava or taro as carbohydrate.
- There is little difference between the meals in terms of composition. The main meal may be during the day, with breakfast often the lightest meal, either leftovers or a drink and a piece of fruit.
- Drinks include coconut water, fruit juices, water, and tea and coffee. The most important traditional drink is *kava*, a drink made from the leaves of a bush related to the black pepper, which is a relaxant and is mildly intoxicating. In the past it was reserved for chiefs and important men, now it is drunk in family and clan ceremonies and to welcome guests.



PARROTFISH

Chicken and Squash Soup

This is a hearty soup normally served with slices of baked breadfruit or cooked taro root and greens.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 large chicken breasts, diced
4 cups water
2 TBS lime juice
salt to taste
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1½ pounds pumpkin, peeled and cubed
¼ cup coconut milk

Heat the oil in a large pot. Sauté onion until softened.
Add chicken and stir-fry over medium heat for 5 minutes.
Add water, lime juice, and salt, and bring to a boil.
Add the tomatoes, pumpkin, and coconut milk; cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes until pumpkin is tender.
Remove from heat and serve hot.

Fresh Fish (Kokoda)

Fish is central to the Fijian diet. Like many other island cultures, Fijians often cook fish through the work of an acid rather than by heat, thus retaining both texture and freshness.

4 absolutely fresh boneless and skinless fish fillets (intended expressly for sashimi), cut into bite-sized pieces
juice of 3 large limes
½ tsp salt
1 cup coconut milk
1 onion, minced
1 green chili, cored, seeded and minced
2 tomatoes, finely chopped
lettuce leaves to serve

Place fish into a glass bowl with lime juice and salt. Mix well. Cover, refrigerate and leave to marinate for 1 hour.
Remove from refrigerator, add coconut milk, onion, and chili and mix well.
Serve over lettuce leaves on individual plates, garnished with tomatoes.

Baked Fish with Plantain

This would traditionally be cooked in an underground oven and served as the main meal. If using foil, you may place the fish and vegetables on a large blanched cabbage leaf to simulate a banana leaf (see box "Plantains and Bananas").

4 large fish steaks (any fresh fish)
1 onion, sliced
4 ripe plantains (available form Asian, Caribbean, and African stores; or use unripe bananas), peeled and sliced into ½-inch-thick disks
4 tomatoes, chopped
2 green chilies, cored, seeded and finely chopped
1 cup coconut milk
salt to taste
4 banana leaves for wrapping (or 4 pieces aluminum foil, 10×10 inches)

Preheat oven to 350°F and lightly oil banana leaves (or foil).
Place one piece of fish in the center of a banana leaf.
Take a fourth of the sliced onions, plantains, tomatoes, and chilies, and arrange around the fish.
Season.
Pour ¼ cup of coconut milk over the fish and vegetables, taking care not to let it run over.
Fold the banana leaf into a parcel, sealing well.
Bake for about 30 minutes, or until the fish and vegetables are cooked through.
Serve immediately.

PLANTAINS AND BANANAS

These are the fruits of an herb of the family *Musaceae*, which is not a true tree. Generally speaking, plantains refer to members of the family that are bland and usually eaten cooked. They sometimes have a few small, hard seeds in the fruit's central core. Bananas refer to those members of the family that are usually eaten raw, as they tend to be sweeter. Plantains and bananas grow in a belt from about the latitude of Florida to that of Kwa-Zulu Natal in South Africa. They are popular as snacks and for the making of beer, and in some countries (e.g., Uganda) serve as the major staple. Banana and plantain blossoms are also part of the cuisine, either raw or cooked, in Southeast Asia (Laos and the Philippines in particular).

In addition to the edible fruit and flowers, the leaves of the plantain and banana are widely used for cooking (as wrappings for steaming and baking foods), and, when green, as plates (in southern India, the Pacific Islands, and Southeast Asia).

Baked Pineapple and Sweet Potato

Sweet potatoes—*kumara*—arrived in Oceania from America in prehistoric times, though how they crossed the Pacific is a bit of a mystery. On many islands they constitute the staff of life, and dried, served as travel food for the far-reaching explorations of Polynesian and Melanesian sailors. The cheese is a recent addition, brought by the influx of tourists and other nonislanders.

2 medium sweet potatoes, cooked and thickly sliced
1 fresh pineapple, peeled, cored and sliced thin
4 TBS freshly grated coconut
4 TBS green onions, chopped
grated cheese or a commercial cheese sauce (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease an ovenproof casserole.
Arrange sweet potato, pineapple, coconut, and green onions in layers in the dish, seasoning each layer.
Place a layer of cheese on top, if desired.
Bake for about 30 minutes.
Serve hot.

Sweet Potato Bread

This is eaten as a breakfast dish or a snack.

¾ cup sweet potato, peeled and coarsely grated
½ cup plain flour
1 cup evaporated milk
½ cup sugar
2½ tsp baking powder
grated rind of 1 lemon

Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease a loaf pan.
Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
Pour into pan.
Bake for about 40 minutes. Test with toothpick for doneness: toothpick should come out dry.
Cool for 5 minutes, then remove from the tin, and cool on a wire rack.
Cut into slices to serve.

Cassava Pudding (Vakalolo)

Cassava was introduced by European colonial administrators in an attempt to provide cheap food for plantation workers. In this Indo-Fijian dish the two traditions mix. This is served these days as dessert.

1½ pounds fresh cassava, peeled and grated
3 ounces fresh, grated coconut (or desiccated coconut "refreshed" with 1 TBS hot water)
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
1 cup sugar
4 cloves, lightly crushed
4 large banana leaves or four 12×12-inch squares heavy baking aluminum foil

Mix all ingredients except leaves thoroughly.
Divide the mixture in four and place each portion in the center of a leaf.
Wrap securely into parcels and steam for 40 minutes.
Alternatively, bake in a preheated moderate oven for 30–40 minutes.
Serve hot.

Fried Bread (Faraoa Funpana)

Rotuma is politically a part of Fiji, but it has distinctly different traditions and language. Rotumans are Polynesians mixed with the descendants of European mutineers and missionaries. They speak a distinct Rotuman Polynesian language. Only a minority of Rotumans still live on the island, most live on other Fijian islands or overseas. This bread is a common breakfast dish. Best eaten while still warm and freshly made.

4 cups flour
1 ounce dried yeast
4 TBS sugar
1 tsp salt
2 TBS butter
warm water for mixing
oil for deep-frying

Combine flour, yeast, sugar, salt, and butter in a food processor.
Blend in just enough warm water to form a soft dough.

(*continued*)

Remove dough and knead for 10 or 15 minutes.
Rub lightly with oil. Let stand in a lightly floured bowl, covered by damp towel, in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
Punch dough down, then roll out on a well-floured surface to ½-inch thick.
Cut into diamond shapes and let stand for a few minutes in a warm place.
Heat oil to about 370°F.
Deep fry dough a few pieces at a time until golden brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels.
Eat warm, dipped in coconut milk or papaya jam.

Cassava Balls (Topoi)

Topoi can be eaten either as a porridge for breakfast or a dessert.

3 cups cassava (yucca or yuca), grated
1 cup sugar
½ cup grated fresh coconut (or ½ cup dessicated coconut refreshed with 2–4 TBS warm water or milk)
1 cup coconut milk
boiling water to cover

Mix 2 cups of the cassava with sugar and coconut. Form into 1- to 1½-inch wide balls. Allow to rest for 10 minutes.
Slip carefully into boiling water. Cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.
Remove from water, drain, and reserve.
Add remaining cassava to pot. Cook stirring constantly until liquid thickens to porridge-like consistency.
Add coconut milk.
Return balls to pot to warm through.
Serve hot or cold.

FINLAND

Often called "Land of a Thousand Lakes" or in Finnish, *Suomi*, which means "marshland," Finland, slightly smaller than Montana, is bordered on one side by Russia; the other side is a Baltic coastline of bays, inlets, and islands. Over 60 percent of the country lies north of the Arctic Circle. The land is heavily forested and dotted with lakes. The climate is very cold in winter.

Farming and fishing yield meat, arctic berries, milk, and fish such as herring from the Baltic, as well as sweet water fish from lakes and rivers.

The population is largely Finnish, who speak a language similar to Estonian. A minority are Swedish or Sami, a nomadic reindeer-herding people (more commonly known as Lapps, but who prefer to be called "Sami" or "Saami") who live north of the Arctic Circle in Finland, Sweden, and Norway.

Traditionally Finnish food was quite limited because of the harsh environment. Although contemporary food is influenced by European (Germany, Sweden, France, Italy) and American food trends, Finnish cooking is characterized by simplicity, less fat (because of an awareness of healthy eating), and use of fresh, natural ingredients of high quality.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: flour (rye, barley, and wheat) made into breads and porridge, potatoes.
- Vegetables: cabbage, carrot, peas, green beans, cucumber, salad vegetables, mushrooms (cultivated and wild).
- Dairy products: cheeses, sour cream, butter, milk.
- Meat: reindeer (for Sami people in particular), beef, pork, chicken, other poultry, eggs; preserved meats: sausages (many kinds—blood, onion, raisin), ham, smoked reindeer.
- Fish: all kinds—salmon, salmon-trout, cod, herring, fresh, smoked; seafood of all kinds (especially crayfish—a seasonal treat in August).
- Seasonings: dill, sour cream, cream, pepper, paprika, parsley, cardamom for cakes and pastries.

Typical Dishes

- Breads: rye crisp bread with a hole in the middle (long-keeping traditional bread).
- In the summer the favorite dish is small crayfish, which are boiled and consumed with ice-cold vodka.

- Salmon dishes: grilled, fried, baked.
- Sami dishes: reindeer stew, dumplings, cloudberry dessert.
- Fish pie: perch, vendace or other fish and pork baked in a rye crust (*kalakukko*).
- Oven bake: baked casseroles of meat or vegetables and cheese with pasta.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks are common. Most meals are substantial to help against the cold.
- European place settings.
- Rye bread eaten with most meals.
- Breakfast usually consists of porridge either salted or sweetened with honey.
- Lunch tends to be the heavy meal of the day: Soup or an appetizer, meat and potatoes with vegetables, dessert.
- The evening meal is often simpler, except for the summer, when it may be eaten outside in company. Bread, soup, and other items are common.
- Bilberry tarts are commonly made and available in most cafes to be eaten with coffee or tea.
- Milk (fresh and buttermilk) is drunk by many to accompany meals. Other popular drinks include coffee, and a variety of alcoholic drinks. Traditional drinks include mead and ale.

Oven Porridge (Uunipuuro)

Porridge was the major staple of southern Finland (as in much of the Baltic) until the twentieth century. Cold-hardy barley was a more common crop than wheat. Oven porridge can be served for breakfast or as dessert.

1 cup barley
1 pint water
3 pints milk
1 tsp salt
butter for greasing

Butter a baking dish and combine all the ingredients in it.
Bake the porridge for 4–5 hours at 270°F.
Serve with milk or honey.

Kainuu Fish Soup (Kainuulainen Kalakeitto)

This is a warming appetizer for a main meal, or a hearty midday meal in itself, eaten with rye bread.

3 pints water or fish stock
2 onions, chopped
5 allspice berries
salt to taste
4 potatoes, peeled and diced
1 pound fish fillets (salmon, whitefish, pike, perch), cut in bite-size pieces

1 tsp dill, minced
1 tsp chives, minced
1 tsp parsley, minced

Garnish

melted butter
1 cup onions, minced
1 cup fresh dill, minced

Place onions and allspice in water or stock and bring to a boil.
Cook until onions are soft.
Remove onions and allspice and discard.
Add potatoes and simmer for 10 minutes.
Add the fish and continue to cook for a few minutes until the fish is done.
Add herbs and adjust the seasoning.
Serve the soup with melted butter, chopped raw onions, and fresh minced dill for each person to add to the soup, and with sliced rye bread.

Salmon in Dill Sauce (Lohi Tilli-kastikkeessa)

This is a dish often made in the summer for a main meal. It is served with boiled new potatoes and a green vegetable.

4 salmon fillets
1 TBS oil
1 tsp crushed peppercorns
⅔ cucumber, diced
1 TBS chopped fresh dill
Juice of ½ lemon
⅔ cup cream
2 TBS butter
salt, pepper to taste
chopped fresh dill for garnish

Brush salmon with oil; sprinkle with peppercorns, pressing into the flesh.
Grill for 5 minutes on each side, until just cooked.
Make sauce: heat cucumber, dill, lemon juice, and cream to a simmer.
Add butter and seasoning. Turn off heat.
Pour sauce over salmon; garnish with dill.

Mushroom Salad (Suomalainen Sienisalaatti)

This is traditionally made with salted mushrooms. If you use salted mushrooms, be sure to soak them to get rid of excess salt before preparing. Wild mushrooms are still gathered usually in the fall, and salted or dried for later use.

1 cup cream
1–2 tsp lemon juice or vinegar
½ tsp sugar
salt and white pepper to taste
2 cups salted mushrooms available in some specialty shops, or substitute fresh champignon or oyster or other mushroom, chopped
1 onion, finely chopped

(*continued*)

Blend cream and lemon juice, and season well to your taste (if using salted mushrooms, omit the salt).
Stir in mushrooms and onions.
Serve with meat, fowl, or fish.

Carrot Bake (Porkkana-laattikko)

This is a traditional Christmas dish, served to accompany baked ham on Christmas day. Other accompaniments are turnip bake and beetroot salad.

2 cups water
1½ cups pudding or short-grain rice
2 cups milk
2½ pounds carrots, peeled, cooked, and grated
2 eggs, beaten
salt, pepper, nutmeg to taste
2 TBS bread crumbs
2 TBS butter, diced

Bring water and pudding rice to a boil.
Cook until all the water has been absorbed.
Add milk and simmer until rice is tender.
Combine carrots, eggs, and seasonings with the cooked rice.
Transfer to a buttered 8×10-inch baking dish.
Top with bread crumbs and butter.
Bake at 375°F for 40 minutes or until browned.

Meatballs (Lihapullat)

Meat—pork or beef—features as often as fish in main meals, often as meatballs.

½ cup fine dry bread crumbs
1 TBS water
½ cup cream
1 pound ground beef
1 onion, finely minced
1 TBS oil
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp allspice
¼ tsp pepper
oil for frying
2 TBS water
pan juices (for gravy)
2 TBS butter (for gravy)
2 TBS flour (for gravy)
½ cup cream

Soak bread crumbs in water and cream. Let stand until crumbs are well moistened.
Sauté onion in oil in a frying pan until softened.
Add onion, egg, and seasonings to meat and mix well.

Wet hands and shape the mixture into 2-inch balls.
Heat more oil in the pan. Fry meatballs on all sides 4–6 at a time, until golden and cooked throughout. Remove meatballs and drain. Keep warm.
Add water and deglaze pan. Transfer pan juices to a small bowl.
Melt butter in the pan and brown the flour lightly, stirring continuously.
Add the deglazed juices, stirring constantly.
Add the cream and check seasoning.
Pour gravy over meatballs.
Serve with potatoes and grated carrots, dill pickles, and a lingonberry relish.

Lingonberry Dessert (Marjakiisseli)

The vast variety of northern berries—lingonberries, cloudberries, European cranberries, bilberries—have been traditionally gathered from the wild.

1 cup lingonberries (fresh or frozen; strawberries, bilberries, red currants, raspberries, huckleberries can also be used instead)
1 quart, sweetened berry juice
4 TBS cornflour
sugar, as needed

Place the berries in a serving dish.
Heat the juice in a nonaluminum pan. Stir some of the warm juice into the cornflour and make a slurry. Add the slurry to the hot juice and bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
Remove the saucepan from the heat and pour the thickened juice over the berries. Sprinkle a little sugar on top.
Serve with milk and eat hot or cold.

Blueberry Tart (Mustikkapiirakka)

Berries abound in Finland, often gathered from the wild. Bilberries, which are wild blueberries, are often used for this tart. Adding cardamom to sweet pastries and cakes is typically Finnish.

Pastry

⅔ cup butter, softened
1 egg
¼ cup milk
1½ cups flour
1 tsp ground cardamom seeds

Filling

4 cups blueberries (bilberries, huckleberries preferred)
1 cup sugar
juice of ½ lemon
1 TBS cornstarch

(*continued*)

Mix butter, egg, milk, flour, and cardamom to make a dough.
Let stand for 1 hour, refrigerated.
Roll out thinly on a wax paper-lined 8×10-inch baking pan.
Mix blueberries with sugar, lemon juice, and cornstarch.
Spread over dough, leaving a 1-inch margin.
Roll up margins to form a rim.
Bake in preheated 375°F oven 30 minutes, until crust is golden.
Serve warm or cold with coffee.

Sweet Buns (Pikkupullat)

Sweet buns are often eaten for breakfast.

1 tsp yeast
1 pint milk, lukewarm
2 eggs, beaten
½ cup +1 TBS sugar
1 tsp salt
1 TBS powdered cardamom
2 pounds flour
5 ounces butter, softened

In a food processor bowl, dissolve the yeast in the warm milk. Allow to sit for 5 minutes.
Add 1 egg, ½ cup sugar, salt, and cardamom. Process with the flour to make a dough.
Remove the dough and knead on a floured surface until smooth and elastic.
Add the butter and knead the dough until it comes off your hands. Place in a bowl and cover with a damp towel.
Leave in a warm draft-free place until doubled in size.
Place on a floured board and divide the dough into 12 portions.
Shape into small round buns and place well apart on a floured cookie sheet.
Leave in a warm place until well risen, about 1 hour.
Brush the risen buns with remaining egg; sprinkle with the remaining sugar.
Bake buns in a preheated oven at 420°F for 8–10 minutes.
Cool covered with a cloth or towel.

FRANCE

Centrally located in Western Europe, running from Germany and the Low Countries in the north to Spain, the Mediterranean Sea, and Italy in the south, and from the Atlantic in the west to the Alps in the east, France enjoys a number of temperate climatic areas. The south (Provence) is Mediterranean and warm, the Alps and the Jura mountain areas are colder. The rest of the country lies in between these climatic conditions.

French cuisine has been the standard for Western cuisine for centuries, and French culinary tradition–ranging from place settings through the order of meals to the choice of drinks—still dominates Western food cultures.

There are two large cooking divisions in France: one based on the cooking fats used (olive oil; butter; goose or duck fat; lard; or walnut oil) and the other based on the use of garlic, onion, or shallots for flavoring. Thus traditionally, the north (northwest Normandy, Brittany, Touraine; northeast Alsace-Lorraine and Franche-Comté) cooks with butter; the southeast (Languedoc, Provence) with olive oil; the southwest (Gascony, Béarn, Guyenne) with goose or duck fat; the east (Lyon, Savoy) and extreme north (Picardy, Champagne) with pork fat (lard). Walnut oil is also much used in the southwest and central regions. Garlic is the natural partner of olive oil in Provençal cooking in the southeast, whereas shallots typify the cooking of Touraine and Bordeaux in the west. Almost everywhere else, the onion (and to a lesser extent, the leek) is more widely used.

However, this rough division is rent by multiple lines of its own. Each region is noted for specific dishes and styles of cooking that capitalize on the quality ingredients produced in that specific environment. The cooking of the extreme north (Picardy and Champagne close to the Belgian border) and northeast (Alsace and Lorraine near Germany) is based on pork, cabbage, potatoes, sausages, beer (as grapes do not grow well there), and sauerkraut, all of which are typical of its neighbors' preferences as well, and well suited to a cold climate. *Presalé* lamb ("pre-flavored" by the salty marsh grass on which they graze), fish and seafood from the Atlantic coast (such as sole, lobster, mussels, oysters, and scallops), and apples which are made into Calvados brandy are the pride of northwest Normandy. The cooking of southeast Provence, based on tomatoes, eggplants, and fish and seafood from the Mediterranean coast, is more in keeping with a hot climate. Likewise based on robust flavors, the cuisine of southwestern Gascony and Bearn, and that of neighboring Languedoc, share characteristics with neighboring northern Spain and echo the flavors of Basque and Catalan cooking.

The wine producing regions, Burgundy and Bordeaux, are noted for classic dishes given their distinctive flavor by the region's quality wine: *boeuf à la bourgignonne* (beef stewed in red wine) and *sauce bordelaise* (red wine sauce). The great dishes and best produce from all of these regions have found their way to the best restaurants of Paris (and elsewhere in and outside France) where they have been refined yet further to produce elaborate *grande* or *haute cuisine*, characterized by complex sauces and methods of preparation. At the opposite end is well-prepared daily home cooking of good quality (*cuisine bourgeoise*) or good, down to earth cooking (*cuisine bonne femme*).

The initial stimulus of Italian cooking has traditionally been credited with the emergence of French cuisine after the Middle Ages, but several recently discovered sixteenth century cookbooks are now promoting a different view. The French court—the most luxurious court in Europe between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries—developed many dishes and styles of cooking and encouraged the rise of professional cooks. After the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century, French chefs (and the aristocrats who had benefited and learned from them) spread as exiles throughout Europe and heavily influenced most European cuisines.

French cooking has evolved over the centuries from reliance on exotic products and eye-catching sculptured dishes, through a period of heavy formalization and the creation of complex dishes reliant on heavy sauces, to the modern period with a greater reliance on fresh produce, lighter dishes, and greater appreciation of provincial cuisine. Many historical French chefs are world renowned, and their recipes are reproduced and served to this day.

Foodstuffs

- French cooking incorporates virtually any food product to be found throughout Europe.
- The choice of meats is extensive, and the preference for a particular meat depends on the area. Pork and beef are favorites in the northern part of the country. Chicken is a famous delicacy in Alsace. In the south, different varieties of beef and also lamb are served. Duck, turkey, and other birds such as snipe and woodcock are on the menu in season. Virtually all parts of the animal are eaten, including pig's ears, internal organs, brain, and so on. Much meat is eaten fresh, and other quantities go toward the making of hundreds of varieties of sausages and preserved meats such as hams.
- The French enjoy proximity to two seas—the Mediterranean and the Atlantic—from which they obtain an enormous variety of seafood—notably along the coasts where fresh seafood can be purchased and prepared as soon as it is unloaded from the boats. Oysters, a variety of clams, mussels, sea snails and other mollusks, as well as lobster and shrimp are in demand, some eaten raw, others cooked. Fish in demand include breams, mullets, cod, mackerel, and other sea fish. Eels and sweet-water fish such as trout are raised in ponds and streams, or caught in estuaries.
- Carbohydrates include wheat products, from which many different crusty breads are made, potatoes, *topinambours* (Jerusalem artichokes), rice, and various pasta. Bread is by far the most common carbohydrate. The French also make an enormous variety of other baked foods. Buns and rolls are eaten by all, and different areas of the country have their own specialties. Cakes, biscuits,

and cookies, both locally made by small *patisseries*, and commercially by large-scale bakeries, can be found throughout the country.
- Vegetables, in fresh or cooked form include carrots, onions, garlic, potatoes, cabbage, olives, a variety of green leaves, and articles such as artichokes and asparagus.
- Fruits include apples and pears from Normandy and Brittany, peaches and plums, grapes (both for eating and for wine), berries of various sorts, and more recently tropical and exotic fruits such as kiwi fruit, bananas, and others.
- France has an extensive dairy industry. The country produces many varieties of cheeses (which allegedly prompted one French president to remark that "it is impossible to govern a people who disagree over 246 varieties of cheese"), the number ranging from 200–1000, depending on whether only the major ones are counted, or minor regional variations as well. Milk is used for coffee. Heavy and lighter creams are used for sauces, as well as for ice cream, cream desserts, cake fillings.
- Eggs are used on their own in the form of simple omelets, and for the making of sauces, for binding other foodstuffs together, and as elements in major dishes. Hens' eggs are most common, but French markets also supply duck, goose, and quail eggs.
- France has also proven an ideal setting for growing grapevines, and as a consequence has the most elaborate viticulture in the world, with many varieties of wine produced throughout the country. Some of these wines are extremely rare, and as a consequence, expensive. Notwithstanding the popularity (and commercial success) of wine industries in other countries (e.g. California, Chile, Australia, Italy), French tastes and selection, as well as traditional names and varieties, dominate the market. Wines—both red (usually drunk with darker and heavier dishes) and white (usually drunk with fish and paler meats, lighter dishes)—are made throughout the country, both famous *appelation controllé* (wines from a particular named area) and simple country wines made by a farmer for local consumption.
- Wines, carbonated water, and beer are the most common drinks to accompany meals. Smaller children are given heavily diluted wine as part of a family meal. Coffee is drunk heavily milked for breakfast, and at times during the day, sometimes with pastry.

Typical Dishes

- There are a vast number of French typical regional dishes, some of which are so renowned outside their region that they feature in French restaurants worldwide and have become *haute cuisine* (refined dishes served in specialty restaurants). It would need a large book to cite even a fraction of them all. These include extreme northern Picardy, Flanders, Artois, and Champagne regions' pickled herring (*harengs saurs*); leek and cream tart (*flamiche*); tripe sausages (*andouillettes*); boiled or stewed meats and vegetables (*hochepot* or *potée*). For the northwest: Brittany's eel stew (*matelote d'anguilles*) and *crêpes*; Touraine's potted pork (*rillette*); Normandy's sole in cream sauce (*sole à la deauvillaise*) and chicken in cream; and Calvados's apple brandy (*poulet Valée d'Auge*). Northeast Strasbourg's *pâté de foie gras* with truffles, Lorraine's bacon tart (*quiche Lorraine*), Alsace's sauerkraut and sausages (*choucroute garnie*). Central Burgundy's wine-stewed beef (*boeuf à la Bourguignonne*) and ham in cream sauce (*jambon à la*

crème); Bourbonnais's roast pork with red cabbage and chestnuts (*roti de porc à la Bourbonnaise*), and cherry batter cake (*clafoutis aux cerises noires*). Southwest Gascony's vegetable soup (*garbure*); Dax's almond and hazelnut cake (*dacquoise*); and truffled dishes from Périgord. Southeast Languedoc's bean and meat casserole (*cassoulet*), salt cod spread (*brandade*), saffron-flavored soup (*le mourtayrol*); Provence's fish soup (*bouillabaise*); Nice's anchovy and onion tart (*pissaladière*) and garlic mayonnaise (*aïoli*). The Ile de France region in Central France (which includes Paris and Orleans) is the home of *haute* or *grande cuisine*, where restaurants have refined and continue to refine the best regional dishes.

- French cooking is classified not only by region or province, but also by whether the dish is considered *haute cuisine* (high cuisine that served in restaurants, and, originally, to royalty) or *cuisine bourgeoise* or *cuisine bonne femme* (family or every-day cooking).
- Many dishes are characterized by the presence of a flavoring sauce. These are often thickened by flour or eggs, and in the north of the country, by cream. Sauces often incorporate local wines in their makeup.

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day and snacks, stopping at mid-morning for a bite, and in late afternoon for a bite and a drink.
- European place settings, including forks, spoons, and knives for different courses originated in France (see box "European Table-Setting Traditions").
- Breakfast: a large cup or bowl of milky coffee and a slice of fresh bread, or *croissants* (flaky butter rolls), or *brioche* rolls.
- Lunch: for some, the major meal of the day, which can include an appetizer of fresh vegetables in dressing, a soup of the season. A main course of cooked meat, a carbohydrate, and some cooked vegetables. Dessert follows, sometimes fresh fruit of the season, sometimes a cooked dessert such as a sweet.
- Evening: evening meals can be light for some people, but are more often elaborate dinners, both in the household, and most notably in company. A full meal can consists of an appetizer (*hors d'oeuvres*) of savory pastry, bits of fish or meat or vegetables. This is followed by a soup. Fish with some accompaniment follows. Then comes the main meat dish served with cooked vegetables and a carbohydrate. A fresh, simple (commonly green) salad, flavored lightly by a vinaigrette (lemon juice or vinegar, oil, salt, and pepper, perhaps mustard) follows, to cleanse the palate. Then come some cheeses and fresh fruit. Some meals may end here, or continue with a finale of a cooked or baked sweet. Small dishes of sweet or sour confections may be served between courses to refresh the palate in preparation for the next course.
- Wine or beer (depending on region and occasion) is matched to the dish. Often the same wine used in cooking the main dish will be used for drinking as well (which also includes the cheese course). A sparkling wine (only that from the Champagne region may rightfully claim the name) may be served with the *hors d'oeuvres*, and *eaux de vie* (distilled fruit liqueurs) may be served after the meal.
- As the birthplace of the restaurant, France has an enormous range of eating places—from neighborhood bistros, simple country eateries, to famed chef's

EUROPEAN TABLE-SETTING TRADITIONS

Forks, knives, and spoons are used all over the world. But the table arrangements that are most common today—called "standard European table settings" here—originated in Europe during the heyday of French culture between the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment. The normal arrangement is for diners to eat seated at a table, all plates and utensils arrayed before them.

In formal dining there is supposed to be a separate set of utensils for every dish and its related foods, for example, meat, a starch, and vegetables that come together, as well as separate plates and glasses for each type of food. Food is brought to the table and served, one remove at a time. Once finished, the food and its associated utensils are removed to be replaced by another. In modern dining, this has been curtailed to one or two of each type of utensil. The normal setting consists of various arrangements of knives, forks, and spoons of various sizes (and sometimes specialized shapes). These are arranged with the main plate in the center, knives on the right, forks on the left, dessert utensils toward the center of the table, soup spoons to the right of knives. The order of use is from the outside inward, then those at the top. Utensils were generally of metal coated with nonreactive silver (hence the name "silverware" for cutlery). Plates were generally of china or glass (in previous centuries they were of pewter, silver, or gold for those who could afford it). Most food is brought to the mouth using utensils only.

There are a number of other major table-setting traditions. All table settings depend on what is considered appropriate for the culture concerned, and are dependent, at least in part, on available technologies.

establishments (top-rated with 3 Michelin stars), and eating out and, more importantly, eating well is very much part of everyday life.

- Restaurants serving international food—Chinese, Japanese, Thai—and offering the cuisines of former French colonies (Vietnamese, Laotian) are plentiful in major cities.

Mushrooms in Garlic
(Champignons à l'Ail)

This is served as an appetizer, before the main dish.

2 ounces butter
2 ounces water
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ pound small, closed white mushrooms, cleaned and trimmed

Melt butter in the water in a small pan.
Add garlic. Simmer briefly until garlic becomes fragrant.
Stir in mushrooms.
Simmer gently for about 10 minutes.
Serve hot.

"Good Woman" Vegetable Soup (Potage Bonne Femme)

This classic soup is often made at home.

2 ounces butter
1 large leek, white part only, shredded
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 large potatoes, peeled and diced
water to cover
salt and pepper to taste
3–4 TBS cream
3 TBS parsley, minced

Melt butter in a heavy pot. Fry the leek gently.
Add carrot and potato. Season.
Add water to cover. Simmer for at least 45 minutes until all the vegetables are very soft.
Puree the soup in a blender.
Before serving, stir in cream.
Serve sprinkled with parsley.

Baked Eggs (Oeufs Mornay)

This can be served as a light supper with bread and salad.

2 ounces butter
2 TBS flour
4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled and sliced into quarters
¾ pint milk, slowly warmed up with 1 bay leaf, 1 slice onion, and 3 peppercorns
salt and pepper to taste
8 ounces yellow cheese, grated (not processed cheese!)
1 ounce grated parmesan cheese

Melt butter in a pan.
Add flour, stirring to form a paste. Reduce heat to minimum.
Discard bay leaf, onion, and peppercorns, and stir in milk gradually to flour paste, a bit at a time, mixing well until absorbed before adding more.
Stir constantly all around the pan so that the sauce does not stick to the bottom or sides.
Season and allow to thicken slightly. If too thick, add more milk. Remove from heat.
Add grated cheese. Stir only once, then allow cheese to melt and dissolve (if you stir too much, cheese will become stringy and the sauce will curdle).
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Arrange eggs on an oven-proof dish.
Pour cheese sauce over eggs. Sprinkle with parmesan.

Bake at 425°F for 10 to 20 minutes, or until the cheese sauce is bubbly and slightly colored.
Serve hot.

Ham with Cream Sauce (Jambon à la Crème)

This is a simple dish commonly made in Burgundy, usually served for a family meal.

6 shallots, minced
5 juniper berries, crushed
5 TBS white wine vinegar
2 ounces butter
2 ounces flour
1 cup hot beef or chicken stock (or 1 stock cube dissolved in 1 cup hot water)
¼ cup white wine
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup cream
1 tsp butter
8 slices cooked ham
4 TBS breadcrumbs

Gently simmer the shallots and juniper berries in the wine vinegar until the vinegar has evaporated. Set aside.
Prepare the sauce: melt the butter and stir in the flour.
Allow the flour to brown slightly, then gradually pour in the stock, stirring constantly to avoid lumps.
When the stock has been absorbed, stir in the wine, shallot and juniper mixture, and season.
Cook gently until thickened, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat.
Slowly stir in the cream and 1 tsp butter.
Place ham in one layer in a baking dish.
Pour the sauce over the ham and sprinkle with breadcrumbs.
Bake in a 425°F oven for about 15 minutes, or until lightly colored.

Lyon-Style Potatoes (Pommes Lyonnais)

Potatoes, introduced during the seventeenth century, gradually became popular. These can be served as a dish on their own.

4 medium potatoes, scrubbed and cut into very thin disks
2 medium onions, chopped
4 ounces butter, diced
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup minced parsley

On a buttered shallow baking dish, arrange alternating layers of potatoes and chopped onion, sprinkling with salt and pepper, diced butter, and parsley between layers.

(*continued*)

Reserve some butter and parsley for topping.
Bake at 300°F for about 1½ hours, or until the potatoes are tender.

Braised Vegetables from Provence
(Ratatouille)

This is another Provencal dish that has become popular nationwide, and thus has many variations.

- 1 large eggplant, sliced ½-inch thick
- 4 TBS olive oil
- 1 large white onion, sliced into ½-inch rings
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 bell peppers (1 each red, green, yellow), cored and sliced into ½-inch rings
- 2 medium zucchini, sliced ½-inch thick
- 2 cups fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme or oregano
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 TBS (or more) tomato paste
- 1 tsp (or more) sugar
- ¼ cup fresh parsley

Sprinkle eggplant slices with salt. Let them stand for about 20 minutes to sweat out some of their bitterness. Rinse off the brown liquid and pat slices dry with paper towels.
In a lidded, heavy saucepan, heat the olive oil.
Gently cook onions and garlic in the oil for a minute or two.
Add bell peppers, eggplant, and zucchini.
Top with chopped tomatoes, thyme, and seasoning.
Turn heat down to the minimum.
Cover and simmer very gently for about 45 minutes, or until vegetables are very tender.
Check seasoning, and add tomato paste to sharpen the flavor, or sugar to tone down too much tartness.
Sprinkle with parsley.
Serve with crusty French bread and olives.

Nice-Style Fish and Fresh Vegetable Salad
(Salade Niçoise)

This classic Provençal dish is popular throughout the country for a light meal on its own or as an appetizer.

- 2 small heads of crisp lettuce (Bibb or Boston), torn or shredded
- 2 ripe, fresh tomatoes, quartered, or 8 cherry tomatoes

1 cup thin cucumber slices
1 cup quickly blanched (crisp-tender) whole green beans, trimmed
handful of black olives
4 new, waxy potatoes, cubed and cooled
4 slices grilled fresh tuna steaks (or one large can tuna chunks, drained)
4 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, quartered (or eight quail eggs)
8 anchovies

Dressing

6 TBS virgin olive oil
5 TBS red wine vinegar
1 tsp Dijon mustard
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Arrange lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, olives, and potatoes in a wide bowl.
Top with tuna, eggs, and anchovies.
Mix all dressing ingredients and drizzle over salad.
Serve on a hot day, with crusty French bread if desired.

Onion Tart (Tarte à l'Oignon)

This is a quiche-type dish from Alsace, in northern France. It is eaten as a light lunch or supper.

Dough

5 ounces flour
2½ ounces butter
1 egg, beaten
2–3 TBS water

Filling

4 ounces butter
1½ pounds onions, sliced fine
2 eggs, beaten
½ pint cream
salt and pepper to taste

In a food processor, mix flour, butter, egg and just enough water to make a pliable dough.
Remove the dough and chill for ½ hour.
Meanwhile, make the filling:
Heat butter in a pan, and cook onions gently until golden. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
Beat eggs and cream together, add to onions, and season.
Roll out the pastry about ⅛-inch or thinner, and line a 10-inch pie plate or tart dish.
Fill the pastry with the onion and cream mixture.
Bake in a medium-hot oven (about 350°F) for about 40 minutes, or until done.
Serve hot.

Buckwheat Savory Crêpes from Brittany (Galettes Complètes)

In Breton tradition, *galettes* are always made with buckwheat and are savory, *crêpes* are sweet and made of wheat flour. *Galettes* can serve as a small meal or as a snack.

8 ounces buckwheat flour
pinch of salt
2 eggs
1 pint cold water
1½ ounces of melted butter plus extra for greasing
½ cup crème fraiche or sour cream
4 eggs

In a blender or food processor, mix the buckwheat flour, salt, eggs, cold water, and butter until smooth.
Let the batter rest for two hours.
Heat a heavy cast-iron *galette* pan, without a rim (or a heavy iron or nonstick pan with a low rim).
Grease with a paper towel dipped in liquid butter.
Pour ¼ of the batter, and tilt pan to spread as thin as possible.
When it is just cooked through, heap ¼ of the filling in the middle of the *galette*.
Make a slight depression on the filling and place 1 teaspoon (or more, if desired) of crème fraiche.
Break an egg over the crème fraiche and allow briefly to warm through.
Enclose the filling by flipping two opposite sides of the *gallette* over the other two, to form a square. Turn over carefully and immediately slide onto a warmed plate.
Serve with a green salad, and more of the crème fraiche.

Filling

Fillings are a matter of choice (ham, sausage, cheese, etc). To be "*complète*" however:

2 cups finely sliced or shredded ham or/and cheese
2 tomatoes, finely sliced
1 small onion, finely sliced

Divide the ingredients into 4, and use as directed for filling the crepes.

Egg and Cheese Sandwich (Croque Monsieur)

This is a traditional light meal throughout France. Working people often have this at lunch, as it is quick and filling.

8 slices good, white bread, crusts trimmed
1 cup shredded good, sharp, yellow cheese (Monterey Jack, Emmenthal, or similar)
4 slices smoked ham

2 eggs, well beaten and slightly thinned with water or milk, in a large flat soup plate
oil or butter for frying

Make sandwiches of 2 slices of bread with cheese spread evenly inside and ham.
Heat fat in a heavy frying pan.
Dip each sandwich in beaten egg on both sides.
Fry gently until the outside is golden brown and the cheese inside melts.
Serve warm.

Three-flavor Baked Custard (Petits Pots de Crème)

This is an elaborate dessert.

Individual custard cups or ramekins (twelve altogether) are preferred for preparing this dish, though it is possible to make in three round baking dishes. Normally, a baked custard such as this is eaten from the ramekin rather than being served out.

1⅓ pints milk
5 ounces sugar
few drops vanilla extract
1 tsp instant coffee
2 TBS cocoa powder
3 whole eggs
3 egg yolks
12 small custard cups or ramekins or 3 1-pint round baking dishes

Preheat oven to 400°F.
Scald milk and sugar. Remove from heat and set aside.
Put the instant coffee, the cocoa powder, and a few drops of vanilla in separate heatproof bowls.
Combine eggs and egg yolks in a bowl and whisk to blend.
Whisk in the hot milk.
Strain and divide the mixture equally into the three bowls.
Whisk each bowl separately, rinsing the whisk between times.
Fill four of the ramekins with the coffee mixture, four with chocolate, and the remaining four with vanilla. (Or fill three larger round baking dishes.)
Line the bottom of a large baking pan with wax paper.
Set the twelve ramekins (or three baking dishes) in the pan well apart.
Pour hot water into the pan to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins.
Reduce the oven heat to 375°F and bake for about 20 minutes (about 25 minutes for the larger dishes).
(There may be a one-inch circle of liquid custard in the middle, but this will solidify as the custard cools.)
Leave the custard to cool in the baking pan in the oven, with the door open, then refrigerate.
Serve chilled, topped with a spoonful of whipped cream if desired.

GABON

Gabon is a western African country on the shores of the Atlantic, slightly smaller than Colorado. It borders Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, and the Gulf of Guinea.

Gabon is tropical and is largely covered by forests. Containing one of the largest remaining forests in Africa, Gabon has a huge variety of wildlife in its seas and hinterland. The climate is tropical and very humid.

There are a number of ethnic groups, the most populous being the Fang.

Cocoa, coffee, and fish are raised for export. As in other West African countries, food is based on a manioc (cassava) staple eaten with stewed or mashed vegetables, with fish or meat, usually game.

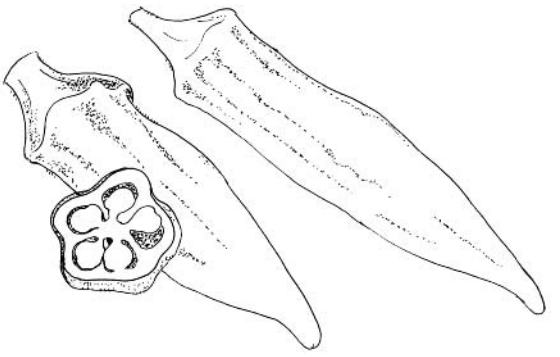
Foodstuffs

- Cassava (yucca) is the most common crop for food. This is turned into a dry flour, which can then be baked or made into a porridge.
- Forest products, including greens, mushrooms, nuts, some kinds of fruits, and particularly "bush meat"—game animals of all sorts—are taken from the extensive forests.
- All kinds of meat are eaten, including monkeys, pangolin, squirrels, rats, and birds of all sorts. Households raise goats and cattle, as well as chickens for consumption.
- Tropical fruits are raised, including pineapples, mango, and particularly several varieties of bananas.
- Vegetables include a variety of yams (both domesticated and wild), okra, greens, sweet potatoes, and notably peanuts and chilies which are used in sauces.

Typical Dishes

- As in much of West Africa, the staple is *bâton de manioc* (steamed cassava flour), which is served with a variety of vegetable, fish, and meat sauces and stews.
- Various sandwiches of baguettes, often filled with shaved or sliced meat and a sauce, are common as midday meals.

Styles of Eating



OKRA

- Most people try to eat three meals a day, though that depends on their occupation and resources available to them.
- Gabonese traditional families normally eat together on a mat on the floor, sharing food from a common pot.
- Breakfast is normally a stiff porridge with leftovers from the previous day's dinner, washed down with coffee or tea.
- Meals may be preceded by a soup, but for most households, a thick soup is more likely to be the main side dish, together with a thick porridge staple or *bâton de manioc*.
- The midday meal is lighter, and may consist of little more than a snack, or of a meal like the evening meal.
- The evening meal is the main one of the day, consisting of the staple, usually *bâton de manioc* and one or more side dishes or sauces, into which the *bâton* is dipped, or which is poured on the *bâton*. Meat or fish is eaten once a day, usually for the evening meal.
- Snacks are consumed at any time of the day.
- In the towns, restaurants and cafes serve European style with knife, fork, and spoon, and individual dishes.

Okra Sauce (Dongo-Dongo)

This sauce is served with *bâton de manioc* or rice for the main meal. The size of the okra pieces affects the consistency of this dish: the smaller the pieces, the more glutinous the result.

2 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 bouillon cubes
20 okra, stem ends removed, sliced into 1-inch pieces, rings, or chopped
2 hot chili peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped fine
8 ounces dried, smoked fish, cleaned and rinsed (or ½ pound stewing meat, cubed)
1 4-ounce can tomato paste
4 cups water

Heat oil in a saucepan.
Sauté onions until golden. Add garlic and sauté for 1 more minute.
Crumble stock cubes and add together with okra and peppers. Cook for 2–3 minutes.
Add water, cover, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and add fish (or meat) and the tomato paste.
Simmer until the okra and fish are tender.
Add water if the soup is too thick.
Serve with *manioc*.

Chicken in Palm Butter Sauce (Poulet Moambé)

Chickens are raised by most households, and cooking in palm butter provides a red color and nutty flavor.

2 TBS palm or other oil
8 chicken drumsticks
1 onion, chopped fine
1 large ripe tomato, chopped (or 1 small can tomatoes, drained)
12 okra, chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 chili pepper, chopped
salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper to taste
2 cups *moambé/nyembwe* sauce (palm butter) or canned palm soup base (available from African stores)
1 cup water

Heat the oil in a saucepan and quickly brown the chicken on all sides. Remove, drain, and reserve.
In the same pan, fry onions until soft. Add tomatoes, okra, garlic, and chili.
Return chicken to the pan, reduce heat, and add salt and spices.
Add *moambé* sauce or canned palm soup base and one cup water.
Cover and simmer gently until everything is tender (30–45 minutes), stirring often.
The red palm oil tends to separate from the sauce; some people remove some or most of this red oil before serving; otherwise, give a final stir before serving.
Serve with *bâton de manioc* or *fufu*.

Chicken in Nuts (Poulet au Gnemboue)

The traditional nuts are forest products that are not exported. Almonds or hazelnuts can substitute. Serve this with *bâton de manioc* for a main meal.

6 ounces palm nuts, almonds, or hazelnuts
¾ pint water
½ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp black pepper
1 tsp salt
1 clove garlic, minced finely
3 green onions, sliced thinly
1 2-pound chicken, cut in serving pieces

Pulverize nuts with mortar and pestle and mix with the water, or grind nuts in a blender or food processor with the water.
Place the nut mixture in a saucepan.
Stir in the peppers, salt, garlic, and green onions. Mix ingredients well.
Place pieces of chicken in the nut mixture. Cover and cook over very low heat for 1½ hours.
Check often and stir, and add water if necessary.

Coupé-Coupé (*Barbecue*)

Coupé-coupé, enclosed in a French baguette to make a sandwich, is often found in urban areas and sold to workers for lunch. The barbecued meat is often added to a main meal.

1 pound beef, round steak or London broil
1 cup stock (or 1 stock cube dissolved in 1 cup hot water)
cayenne pepper to taste
1 TBS palm oil
juice of 1 lime

Mix stock, cayenne, oil, and lime juice to make a marinade.
Pour marinade over meat in a glass container. Let meat marinate for at least half an hour in a cool place.
Cook meat over a slow charcoal fire (or under a medium grill).
The object is to cook the meat slowly. Cool down the charcoal from time to time by spraying it lightly with water.
Baste meat every 10 minutes with more marinade.
Remove meat from fire, slice thinly, and serve in baguettes with a thick pepper or peanut sauce.

THE GAMBIA

The Gambia is a narrow strip of ground on both sides of the Gambia River, and is entirely surrounded by Senegal.

The climate is tropical and the terrain consists of the littoral and flood plain of the Gambia river, enabling subsistence raising of rice and other staples, vegetables, fruits, goats, and chickens.

There are several ethnic groups including Mandinka, Wollof, and Creoles (mixed Afro-European). Most of the population is Muslim. Gambian food focuses on fish caught along the Gambia River, as main ingredients and as flavoring, either salted, smoked, or fermented. There are common dishes with Senegal and Sierra Leone, and elements borrowed from Arabian and Creole cuisine.

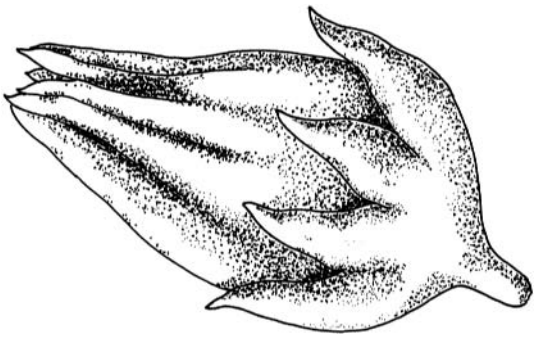
Foodstuffs

- Rice (a luxury), millet, sorghum, and cassava are the principle crops, and serve as the main ingredients of meals. Cassava has been adopted from neighboring Sierra Leone; yams from Nigeria. Wheat flour, made into *fufu*, is a Creole import.
- Fish and other marine life from the river are major food items. These include mollusks, crayfish, and frogs.
- Meat is in great demand. The most common meats are goat, chicken, and beef.
- Vegetables include eggplant, pumpkin, tomato, locust bean, black-eyed bean, other legumes, cabbage, okra, baobab fruit (also called monkey bread) and leaves (fresh and dried), sorrel, tomato.
- Banana, mango, lime, tamarind are consumed.
- Garlic, onion, green onions (locally called *Mandinka* onions because grown in their gardens), black pepper, turmeric, hot peppers (big, small), basil (*pat menger*), bay leaf, fermented sesame seed paste (*ogiri*), fermented locust bean (*locos*), fermented snails (*yate*), smoked fish, palm nut oil, soda (*lubi*), stock cubes, and peanuts are used for seasoning.

Typical Dishes

- Groundnut stew and other stews are eaten as side dishes along with the cooked carbohydrate staple.
- Stews of fish, chicken, or meat (beef or goat) with vegetables: *benachin*.
- Creole-influenced soups with meat and vegetables.

Styles of Eating



HIBISCUS FLOWER

- People eat three meals a day, when possible.
- Families eat together sitting on a mat around a bowl of the staple and some side dishes, which are shared. Creoles eat with European table settings.
- Breakfast: sweet rice and peanut porridge (*churah gerteh*), or millet (*coos*) porridge served with sour milk; or bread and coffee.
- Midday meal: soup of meat and vegetables, flavored with peanuts and hibiscus flower buds (*shackpa plasas* soup); or steamed fish; boiled rice; sautéed eggplant or pumpkin; wheatflour or cassava *fufu*, or other staple. Dessert of mango cream or stewed mangoes.
- Dinner: The evening meal is light, with a soup, such as peanut-flavored bean soup (*bassi nyebe salteh*), accompanied by fermented millet (*cherreh*).
- In the towns, there are large numbers of small cafes and restaurants that serve European style food.

Okra Soup (Supakanja)

Soups can be eaten liquid from a bowl or made more thick and glutinous, as a sauce to be poured over the staple.

½ cup palm oil (or substitute any vegetable oil)
½ pound stewing beef, cut into cubes
1 onion, chopped
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 hot chili pepper (whole for less spicy, chopped for spicy dish)
5 cups water
1 smoked or dried fish, cleaned, rinsed in water, bones removed, broken into bite-sized pieces
1 fresh fish, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 pound greens (spinach, collards, kale, or turnip greens), stems removed, cleaned, washed, and shredded
15 okra, stem ends removed and cut into coins (when using okra, remember that the more finely it is cut, the more glutinous the soup)
1 bouillon cube, crushed
salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Heat about ¼ of the oil in a saucepan. Brown meat. Add the onion and peppers and fry for another 1–2 minutes.
Add all remaining ingredients, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1–2 hours, until all is tender.
When soup has reduced to your liking, stir in additional palm oil (if desired) and simmer for another 10–20 minutes.
Serve with rice.

Stuffed Fish Benachin (Benachin Ruff)

This is the most typical Gambian dish. Serve for a midday meal.

4 whole small fish (about 2 pounds total weight), heads and tails removed, scaled, and cleaned
juice of 2 limes
salt, black pepper to taste
1 cup oil
1 onion, chopped
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
10 cups water
1 eggplant, cubed
1 pound pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled and cubed
5 tender okra, thinly trimmed at the stem end only
1 bitter tomato (substitute 2 tomatillos, available from Latino stores) (optional)
2 TBS tomato paste
2 cubes chicken bouillon
2 bay leaves
2 cups uncooked rice, washed and drained
2 green bell peppers, seeded and quartered

Stuffing

½ cup parsley, chopped
1 cube chicken bouillon, crumbled
½ cup chives, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped

Rub fish well inside and out with lime juice, salt, and pepper. Leave to marinate for 20 minutes.
Mix the stuffing ingredients thoroughly. Stuff into the fish cavity (the belly).
Heat oil in a skillet and shallow fry the fish lightly. Set aside.
In a saucepan, heat 3 tablespoons of the oil used for frying.
Sauté the onion until golden; stir in tomatoes, a pinch of salt, and black pepper.
Simmer, covered, until thickened, about 10 minutes.
Stir in 2 cups water and bring to a boil.
Add fish, eggplant, pumpkin, okra, bitter tomato (if using), tomato paste, bouillon cubes, and bay leaves.
Cover and simmer for 25 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Turn off heat. Remove fish and vegetables to a covered dish to keep warm.
Measure remaining liquid in saucepan. Add enough water to make 5 cups.
Bring to a boil and correct seasoning.
Add rice and bell peppers.
Cover, and simmer 20–25 minutes until rice is done.
To serve, mound rice on individual plates.
Arrange fish and vegetables on top of each mound.
Serve immediately.

Groundnut Stew (Domoda)

Peanuts, imported by the Portuguese into Africa, are as important in The Gambia as in the rest of Western Africa.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 pound stewing meat (beef, pork, or turkey), cubed
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tomatoes (or 1 can tomatoes, drained), chopped
1 bouillon cube, crushed
1 eggplant, cubed
1 hot chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup natural peanut butter
salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a saucepan. Brown the meat, and add onions.
Add all the remaining ingredients except peanut butter.
Add enough water to cover, and bring to a boil.
Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until everything is done (20 minutes or so).
Dissolve peanut butter in a cup of the stock, then add to pan and stir.
Continue to simmer for 10 minutes, stirring often.
Adjust seasoning.
Skim off excess oil from the surface of the stew, if desired.
Serve with plain rice.

Banana and Coconut Beef Stew

This is a stew from the coast which may be eaten for lunch.

2 TBS vegetable oil
2 large onions, chopped
1 large tomato, chopped
1 pound stewing beef, cubed
1 cup water
2 cups coconut milk
5 firm, unripe bananas, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
¼ pound cowpeas, washed and soaked overnight
6 green or French beans, washed
salt and pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a saucepan and cook the onions until translucent.
Add the tomatoes and cook until soft (about 5 minutes).
Stir in the meat and water, cover and simmer until meat is almost tender, about 45 minutes. (Add a bit more water if needed).
Add the coconut milk, and bring to a boil.
Add the bananas, peas, and beans.
Reduce the heat and simmer until the bananas and peas are cooked (soft but not mushy, about 15 minutes).
Season with salt and pepper.
Serve hot over rice, *bâton de manioc* or *fufu*.

One-pot Fish (Benachin)

This is a less elaborate version of *benachin*. Serve for a main meal.

1 cup vegetable oil
2 onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 pounds fresh fish fillets
1 butternut squash (about 1 pound), peeled and cubed
1 hot chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 bay leaf
1 bouillon cube, crushed
2 tomatoes, chopped (or 1 can chopped tomatoes, drained)
1 TBS tomato paste
3 cups water
2 cups rice, rinsed
2–3 ounces dried smoked fish
salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a large pot. Fry the onions for a minute over high heat.
Add garlic and fish, and fry for a few minutes on each side, then remove the fish and set aside.
Add the squash to the onion mixture and cook for a few minutes, stirring often.
Add the peppers and cook for a few more minutes.
Stir in the bay leaf, bouillon cube, tomatoes, tomato paste, and water, and bring to a boil.
Stir in the rice and dried fish.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until everything is tender, about 20–25 minutes.
Check seasoning (the bouillon cube is salted), and add seasoning if necessary.
Serve hot.

Greens with Peanuts (Pla'sas)

This is a vegetarian side dish that may be served for either dinner or lunch, with or without a meat dish. Sorrel, a sour-tasting vegetable (if available), would be the original greens used in this dish.

2 TBS palm or peanut oil
1 medium onion, chopped fine
1 medium bell pepper, seeded and chopped fine
1 medium tomato, chopped fine
16 ounces fresh sorrel or spinach, chopped fine
3 TBS natural peanut butter
¼ cup water
salt and cayenne to taste
½ tsp nutmeg

Heat oil and sauté onions until translucent.
Add pepper and sauté until soft.
Add tomato, spinach, peanut butter, and water and simmer lightly (add more water if needed).

Season, and add nutmeg.
Cover and simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve with rice and a meat dish.

Stewed Mangoes

This is a popular dessert and snack. Serve with custard sauce.

2 large, firm, semi-ripe mangoes, peeled and diced
4 TBS sugar
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
1 cup water
pinch of salt

Place all ingredients in a saucepan.
Bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer until mangoes are tender, about 10 minutes.
Let cool.
Taste, and add more sugar if necessary.

Custard Sauce

4 TBS sugar
2 eggs
1 cup milk
1 cup cream
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated

In the top pan of a double boiler, whisk together all sauce ingredients.
Place over boiling water in the bottom pan.
Continue to whisk until thick.
Remove from heat and let cool.
Serve with the stewed mangoes.

GEORGIA

Georgia is a mountainous country in the southern Caucasus, bordered by the Russian Federation, Chechnya, and Azerbaijan. It was once part of the Russian, and later Soviet, empire, and is now an independent state. There are broad, fertile valleys between the mountains. The Black Sea coast is temperate, whereas the inland areas are cooler. A range of crops—wheat, grapes and other Mediterranean-type fruits, and vegetables are grown; cows are raised for milk and meat; pigs and hens are also raised.

Most of the population is Georgians, who speak a unique Caucasian language with its own ancient script. There are large minorities of Armenians, Azeris, and Ossetians. While Georgians are mostly Eastern Orthodox Christians, there are minority Muslims and Jews who do not eat pork.

Georgian cuisine is rich and diverse, with wide-ranging influence on the cuisine of neighboring countries. This includes the former imperial overlord, Russia, whose cuisine has borrowed numerous dishes, particularly sauces with hot peppers, pickles, and wine from Georgia.

Foodstuffs

- Georgians eat a variety of starchy foods, including rice, noodles, and potatoes.
- The countryside is very fertile, producing a variety of fruits and vegetables. These include onions, garlic, peppers, tomatoes cucumbers, and potatoes.
- Major fruits include plums of many varieties, and a large number of grape varieties, some of them unique to Georgia. Pomegranates, peaches, and apricots are also raised, and eaten either fresh or dried.
- The favorite foods are meat—lamb, goat, beef, chicken—including both the muscle meat and the innards.
- Georgia is a major producer of wines and fruit brandies, which are exported throughout Eastern Europe.

Typical Dishes

- A favorite dish at all main meals is meat grilled on skewers, in various forms: as chunks, meat balls, or sausage-like rolls. These are served with a plum (*tkemali*) or chili (*adzhika*) sauce or condiment.
- Salads of cooked vegetables with walnuts and herbs: *mkhali*.

- Meat cooked with fruit.
- *Khinkali* (filled dumplings) can be eaten at any meal.
- Many dishes are flavored with chili, a special herb mix (*khmeli suneli*) or fruit sauces or dips, which add a piquancy.

POT MARIGOLD

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day, with snacks in between times.
- The main meal is often very elaborate, and can extend from midday until well into the evening.
- Georgians often eat outdoors during the summer, and that serves as a major form of socializing with both men and women.
- Georgians are famous for a complicated feasting etiquette. The table is led by a *tamada* (toastmaster), who proposes traditional toasts. Each toast is repeated by table members before drinking. Every feast is accompanied by numerous toasts: to the guests, the host, friends, ladies, family members, relatives, mother land, those who passed away, and so on. If one wants to leave the table (particularly men), one must first ask the *tamada* for permission to propose a toast to the host family.

Kidney Beans in Plum Sauce (Lobio Tkemalit)

This is the classical starter to any feast or meal with guests.

½ pound kidney beans
½ tsp salt
½ cup *tkemali* sauce (recipe given at the end of this entry)
salt, black pepper to taste
fresh cilantro, trimmed

Soak the beans overnight in water to cover.
The next day, drain and rinse them.
Place in a large pot and cover with fresh water. Add ½ teaspoon of salt.
Bring the water to a boil and simmer until beans are tender, about 1 hour.
Drain.
While the beans are still warm, mash them.
Stir in the *tkemali* and season with salt and pepper to taste.
Serve at room temperature, garnished with cilantro.

Dumplings (Khinkali)

Khinkalis have a variety of fillings, meat or cheese, or greens. They are served hot, with coarsely ground black pepper for dipping. Grasp the doughy top, where the pleats all meet, with the fingers to hold on to the hot dumplings, then discard this "handle."

Dough

4 cups wheat flour
1¼ tsp salt
1¼ cups of warm water
large pot of boiling salted water

Filling

1 pound of mixed ground beef and pork, or lamb
½ tsp black pepper
1¼ tsp salt
½ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp of ground caraway seed
3 small onions, peeled and finely minced
½ cup beef bouillon

Combine the flour, salt, and warm water in a bowl to make a firm dough.
Knead for 15 minutes, then let it sit, covered, for 30 to 40 minutes.
Meanwhile, prepare the filling.
Mix the ground meat, spices, onions, and bouillon, and knead mixture thoroughly with your hands.
Divide the dough into twenty-five pieces.
On a floured board, roll each piece out to a 6-inch disk.
Place about 2 tablespoons of filling in the center of each disk.
Fold the edges of the dough disk up, pinching together in as many pleats as you can and moving in one direction around the dumpling, ensuring each fold of dough overlaps, sealing in the filling.
Holding the dumpling firmly in one hand, twist the pleats together at the center to seal, breaking off the excess dough at the top.
Slide the dumplings, four or five at a time into the boiling salted water, and cook for 12 to 15 minutes.
Serve hot with a plate of freshly ground black pepper for dipping.

Liver with Pomegranate Juice (Ghvidzli)

All parts of animals are used and liked. This would serve as part of a feast.

1 pound fresh calf's liver, cut in four slices (substitute four thin slices of boneless veal, chicken breast, or tender beef)
2 TBS butter
½ cup of freshly squeezed pomegranate juice
3 TBS cilantro, finely minced
salt and black pepper to taste

Mix cilantro, salt, and pepper with pomegranate juice.
Heat butter in pan until foaming stops. Fry liver quickly in butter.
When liver is done, transfer it to a warm serving dish.
Add the pomegranate juice to the fat remaining in the pan. Reduce slightly.
Pour the sauce over the liver and serve at once.

Apple Preserves (Samotkhis Vashlis Muraba)

This is a sweet served to temper hot sauce, or used as a snack.

1 pound apples
boiling water to cover
2¼ cups sugar
2 cups water

Leaving stems intact, pierce the apples all over with a thin skewer and place in a pot.
Cover with boiling water and put a plate on top to keep the apples submerged. Let stand for 15 minutes.
Meanwhile, make the syrup. In a heavy saucepan combine the sugar and 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil, stirring until the sugar dissolves.
Transfer the apples to the boiling syrup and stir for a minute to coat them. (Be careful of the hot syrup.)
Reduce heat and cook, covered, for 15 minutes. Remove the lid and increase the heat to medium high.
Cook rapidly, turning the apples occasionally, for 10 to 15 minutes more, until the fruit is tender but still retains its shape.
Serve with *adzhika*.

Grape-and-Walnut Candies (Chuchkella)

This candy is sold on the streets, and also made at home. Chuchkella is popular all over the Caucasus.

18–20 whole walnut meats
2 pounds red or black seedless grapes
1 tsp cornstarch, dissolved in 2 TBS cold water
1 12-inch long fine cooking string

Tie a knot at the end of the cooking string.
Thread the string onto a heavy needle.
Thread walnuts one by one onto the string.
Remove the needle and tie the ends of string together to make a "necklace" of walnuts.
Puree the grapes in a blender or food processor.
Strain through cheesecloth-lined sieve set over a 2-quart saucepan; discard the skins and must.
Bring the puree to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally.
Boil briskly, uncovered, for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until the puree has cooked down to one cup.
Add starch-water mixture; stirring constantly, cook for another minute or two, until the sauce is thick enough to heavily coat a spoon. Set aside.

(*continued*)

Hold the string and dip the walnuts into the sauce, coating them thoroughly.
Hang the loop in a dry breeze (or before a fan), placing a plate to catch drips.
When the nuts have dried and are no longer sticky to the touch, warm remaining juice to lukewarm and dip the walnuts again. Dry as before.
Repeat dipping and drying process two or three more times, until the nuts are completely coated, and are no longer separate.
When ready to serve, cut the *chuchkella* crosswise and serve with cold water or coffee (avoid the string if possible).
Chuchkella can be kept for a long time in a dry, cool place.

Hot Relish (Adzhika)

Adzhika is a fiery Georgian condiment, which has become popular throughout Russia and many of the former Soviet countries.

1 cup red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 cup hot red pepper, seeded and chopped
¼ cup peeled garlic
¼ cup coriander seeds
2 tsp dried herb mix (*khmeli-suneli*)
1 cup of broken walnut meats

Grind ingredients together in blender or food processor.
Add walnuts a few at a time, just enough to get a smooth spreading cream.
Store in a covered jar refrigerated. Topped with a tablespoon or two of olive oil, it will keep for a few weeks.

Plum Sauce (Tkemali)

Tkemali is the universal condiment in Georgia. It can be used on meat, vegetables, or to flavor soups and stews.

1½ pounds tart, firm, semi-ripe plums, pitted and halved
¼ cup water
2 cloves garlic peeled, roughly chopped
½ tsp salt
¾ tsp coriander seed powder
1 tsp fennel seed
1 tsp cayenne pepper
1 TBS fresh mint, minced fine
⅓ cup cilantro, minced fine

Boil plums in water until soft.
Mash or puree in food processor.
Transfer to a clean pot and simmer for 3 minutes.
In the same food processor bowl used for the plums, process garlic and salt to a fine paste. Add coriander, fennel, and pepper and process until smooth.

Add spice-garlic mixture to plum puree and simmer, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes or until thickened.

Stir in mint and cilantro.

Stored in a jar in the refrigerator, covered with 1 or more tablespoons of olive oil to keep out the air, *tkemali* will keep for a few weeks.

Herb Mix (Khmeli-suneli)

This mix is essential to many Georgian dishes. Like most herbal mixes, it varies from one household to another, so feel free to experiment. If you intend to store for any length of time (the mix will keep for two months if stored in a dry sealed container), use well dried, not fresh herbs. Use in sauces or rub into roasts.

1 TBS coriander powder
½ tsp fenugreek powder
2 tsp parsley
½ tsp mint
½ tsp fennel seed
½ tsp thyme leaves
1 tsp dried pot-marigold petals

Grind all ingredients in a mortar, or use a food processor set to "high" in short bursts.

Store in a sealed container.

GERMANY

In this Western European country, the topography is varied with plains and mountainous areas. The country has a temperate continental climate—cold winters and hot summers, enabling large-scale commercial production of grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock.

The population is predominantly German, with a minority of Turks and Eastern Europeans who came to work in Germany during the 1960s and 1970s.

Typical German cuisine is hearty, as befits a cold country, and centered on good quality items such as meat, cheese, and potatoes (in the north) or noodles (south). Each region has preserved its own culinary tradition, based on local products. Seasonality of foods is particularly important: during the asparagus season, huge quantities are consumed, as are plum tarts during the plum season, *federweisse* (new wine) during the grape harvest, and new beer in October.

Foodstuffs

- Potatoes, wheat and rye breads, noodles, and dumplings are the major staples. Most German localities have their own style of breads, rolls, and cakes.
- Preferred meats are pork and beef. Chicken, duck, and geese (particularly during Christmas) are also used extensively. All parts of the animal are eaten, and some regional foods are based on specific parts of the animal such as liver. Germans had learned the art of making sausages from the Romans, and now they are consumed in huge quantities, with each area having its own specialty.
- Fish, notably herring (pickled and fresh), mackerel (fresh and smoked), trout, and salmon are popular. Eels from ponds and the sea are also eaten pickled in vinegar or smoked.
- The German milk industry supplies a large variety of cheeses (with the exception of those from Alpine areas and Bavaria, these are usually soft cream cheese "quark" types). Cream, particularly whipped cream, is almost essential for any German dessert. Milk, buttermilk, and a variety of yogurts are eaten. Fruit yogurts are particularly loved for breakfast.
- Vegetables include potatoes, carrots, cabbages, asparagus, beans and other legumes, mushrooms, and turnips (including the leaves, only eaten around the Rhine region). Much is eaten fresh, the rest may be cooked or some, such as cabbage, go into making pickles, which may be sweet or savory. Many vegetables are now imported from overseas or other countries of the European Union.

- In addition to a variety of imported fruits, German farmers raise apples, pears, plums, berries, and, famously, grapes. Some of the grapes are table varieties, but most are for making wines, particularly white and red wines along the Rhine and its tributaries.
- Germans tend to like sweetened dishes, so pickles and some savory dishes are prepared with a bit of sugar.
- Seasonings: caraway, chervil, dill, juniper berries, summer savory, pepper, woodruff, vinegar, sour cream, wine, and beer.

Typical Dishes

- Salads, often of fresh and pickled vegetables (beets, gherkins) mixed with bits of smoked meat or fish.
- Pork, as breaded cutlets (*schnitzel*), roast, braised or boiled, in stews, fresh or marinated in vinegar (*sauerbraten*). Most often served either with boiled, fried, or mashed potatoes with gravy and pickled cabbage (*sauerkraut*).
- Hearty soups (including goulash, mushroom, peas, lentils, or cheese) and stews of meat and vegetables (*eintopf*).
- Dumplings (*kloesse* or *knoedel*) of flour or potato and meat or poultry, liver, or bacon.
- Seasonal dishes: in spring, white asparagus tips in cream sauce; in the fall, wild mushrooms or game.
- Boiled or grilled preserved meats: bacon, ham, and many local and regional sausages. Sausages in crusty buns, with mustard, ketchup, and mayonnaise are available from street barrows.
- Turkish and other immigrants have introduced Middle Eastern and Asian accents to German foods. Street foods such as *kebabs* are popular snacks.
- Cream-filled cakes and assorted rich pastries.
- The most popular drink by far is beer. This is followed by coffee and wine. Coffee is drunk along with cakes as snacks. Popular soft drinks include mixtures of fruit juice and soda water (*schorle*). A common method is to mix apple (or some other fruit juice) with soda water for a fizzy drink. Beer is often mixed with bottled drinks for a shandy (*radler* is with fizzy lemon). In Berlin, a light beer called Berlinerweisse is often flavored with woodruff or raspberry. Children drink milk, juice, and fizzy bottled drinks. In winter, mulled wine with spices (*gluhwein*) is popular.

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day and a number of snacks.
- Table settings are European standard. German meals tend to be formal, even within the household. Permission is needed to leave the table before others.
- Breakfast: a mix of cereals and dried fruits (*muesli*) together with plain or flavored yogurts. A variety of breads or rolls. Sausages, cheese, ham, and eggs may be served as well. Coffee, milk, or fruit juice is normally drunk.
- Lunch: for urban working people, usually a simple meal of a bowl of thick, hearty soup with bread and butter, or a sandwich with sausage or cheese. Traditionally lunch was the main meal, with several courses, beginning with appetizer, soup, meat, cooked vegetables, and dessert.
- Evening meal: light meal of bread, butter, cheese or ham, vegetable salad, sweet yogurt and/or fruit.

- On weekends, especially with the whole family or guests, lunch is the main meal and will include an appetizer, soup, main dish of meat with vegetables, and dessert of cooked fruit with whipped cream, cake, or other sweet dish. Lunch and dinner are washed down with wine, beer, milk, or soft drinks, depending on the area, age, and personal choice.
- Many people stop for at least two snacks during the day. These often consist of a cream cake or pastry and a cup of coffee, served either at home or in one of the many cafes, or a sausage (*bratwurst*) in a crusty roll with curry sauce (*curry-wurst*) or mustard from a roadside stand.

White Bean Soup (Weisse Bohnensuppe)

This is often a lunchtime staple, available across the country. Summer savory is the traditional herb for bean soup, and is aptly called *bohnenkraut* (bean herb).

½ pound dry white (navy) beans
3 pints of water
1 ham bone or hock, smoked (or 5 ounces smoked ham, diced)
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 stalks celery, chopped
3 stalks parsley, chopped
2 TBS fresh summer savory, or 1 tsp dried
salt and pepper to taste

Soak beans overnight in water to cover.
Drain, rinse, and put in a large pot with the ham and water.
Simmer uncovered for 45 minutes.
Stir in onions, garlic, celery, parsley, savory, salt and pepper.
Simmer uncovered for 30–45 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
Dice the meat from the ham, and stir in. Discard the bone.
Serve hot with bread and butter.

Herring Salad (Heringsalat)

A very individualistic salad whose ingredients vary from one place to another. Feel free to experiment, but make sure to balance sweet and sour ingredients.

½ pound pickled herring, drained and cut into bite-size pieces (reserve 4 TBS of the liquid)
1 medium tart apple, cored, peeled, diced
1 small sweet red onion, chopped fine
1 sweet-sour pickled gherkin, chopped fine
1 hard-boiled egg, shelled, chopped
2 medium waxy potatoes, boiled in their jackets, sliced ¼-inch thick disks

1 8-ounce can of beets, drained and diced
1 TBS mustard
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup yogurt
1 TBS fresh dill, minced fine
1–2 TBS lemon juice
salt and white pepper to taste

In a bowl, combine herring, apple, onion, gherkin, egg, potatoes, and beets.
Mix a dressing with mustard, sour cream, yogurt, dill, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and reserved herring liquid.
Pour dressing over salad and toss.
Serve with fresh bread and butter.

Warm Potato Salad (Warmer Kartoffelsalat)

A classic German salad that may be the main dish for a light meal or a side dish for a heavier one.

4 slices bacon
1 small onion, chopped
1 tsp flour
½ tsp sugar
¾ tsp salt
¼ tsp celery seeds
¼ tsp pepper
¼ cup water
2½ TBS vinegar
4 medium waxy potatoes, boiled, skinned, and sliced in ⅛-inch slices

Pan fry bacon slowly until crisp, and drain on paper towels. Crumble and set aside.
Sauté onion in bacon fat until golden.
Stir in flour, sugar, salt, celery seeds, and pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring until smooth.
Stir in water and vinegar. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly to prevent lumps.
Gently stir in the potatoes and bacon. Turn off heat.
Cover and serve warm.

Green Eggs (Grüner Eier)

This is served as an appetizer, or sometimes breakfast dish, that can also be the main dish for a light meal (with apologies to Dr. Seuss). German greengrocers sell mixed herbs in posies for green sauce, usually including parsley, dill, chives, borage, lemon balm, sorrel, and French tarragon.

3 TBS whipping cream
½ cup sour cream
juice of ½ lemon
salt and pepper to taste
¼ tsp sugar
¼ cup parsley, chopped fine

(*continued*)

¼ cup dill, chopped fine
¼ cup chives, chopped fine
plus any of the following herbs, chopped fine: 1–2 borage leaves; 1–2 French tarragon stalks; 2–3 sorrel leaves; 5–7 lemon balm leaves
5 eggs, hard-boiled, shelled

Whip cream and thoroughly blend into sour cream, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and sugar.
Reserve some herbs for garnish, and stir the rest into the cream mixture.
Finely chop 1 egg and blend into cream mixture.
Slice remaining eggs into quarters or halves.
On a serving dish, spread the green sauce.
Arrange the eggs over.
Sprinkle with reserved herbs and serve.

Asparagus in White Sauce (Spargel in Weisser Sosse)

Incredibly popular throughout Germany in season, every household and restaurant serves some asparagus variation. Fat, blanched asparagus (sunlight is excluded to keep them white) are preferred.

1½ pounds white asparagus (or 2 cans, drained)
3 TBS butter
3 TBS flour
2 TBS white wine or lemon juice
¼ cup light cream
¼ cup smoked ham or Canadian bacon, diced
pinch nutmeg, freshly grated preferred
¼ tsp salt
8 small sprigs chervil or parsley

If using fresh asparagus, lightly peel the stalks from just below the tips downward using a potato peeler. Slide into briskly boiling salted water and cook until tender but still crisp. Drain and set aside.
Heat butter over low heat in a heavy saucepan. Whisk in flour until well blended.
Gradually add lemon juice, blending well until smooth.
Add cream, seasoning, and ham, stirring until thickened.
When the sauce starts to bubble around the edges, gently stir in asparagus, taking care not to mush them.
Cook just until the asparagus are heated through. Do not let sauce come to a boil.
Serve on warmed plates as a first course, garnished with 2 sprigs of chervil each.

Stewed Red Cabbage (Gedunsteter Rotkohl)

Cabbage is much loved in Germany, especially in the form of pickled sauerkraut. The red variety is often used in salads or stewed to accompany roast meats or poultry.

3 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, sliced fine
1½ pounds red cabbage, core discarded, finely shredded
salt and white pepper to taste
⅓ cup bouillon (or 1 bouillon cube dissolved in ⅓ cup water)
⅔ cup white wine vinegar (white wine ideally)

Heat the oil over medium heat and sauté onion until golden.
Stir in the cabbage, salt, pepper, bouillon, and wine vinegar.
Reduce heat to low and simmer covered, until cabbage is tender, about 15–20 minutes.
Serve with a meat course.

Roast Chicken Stew (Braunes Gefluegelragout)

Stews are often served for the main meal.

2 pounds roast chicken
4 TBS butter
1 onion, chopped
4 TBS flour
3 cups chicken stock
2 slices lemon, including peel
2–3 bay leaves, fresh if possible
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar (white wine ideally)

Remove the meat, light and dark, from the roast chicken (you may keep the bones and skin for making soup), keeping the meat in large chunks, and reserve.
Heat the butter in a saucepan over medium heat.
Stir in onions and cook until softened. Remove the onion and set aside.
Stir flour into the remaining butter and cook until lightly colored.
Whisk in the stock, a little at a time, only adding more when the liquid has been thoroughly absorbed to prevent lumps.
Add the rest of the stock, lemon, bay leaves, reserved onion, salt, pepper, and vinegar.
Simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, then strain, pressing down on the solids.
Taste and correct seasoning.
Gently stir in chicken pieces and cook until completely heated through.
Serve with roast, mashed, or fried potatoes.

Apple Pancakes (Apfelpfannkuchen)

This dish combines two German favorites. Pancakes of various sorts, often topped with whipped cream, are favorite desserts and snacks. Eating apples (in

Germany, the most common are crisp Elstar or Jonagold) are used to keep their shape during cooking.

⅔ cup flour
2 tsp sugar
¼ tsp salt
4 eggs, large, beaten
½ cup milk
2 cups apple, peeled and sliced thin
¾ cup butter or margarine
2 TBS sugar mixed with ¼ tsp cinnamon

In a blender or food processor, mix until smooth the flour, 2 teaspoons sugar, salt, eggs, and milk. Set aside.
Sauté apples in ¼ cup of butter over medium heat for 5–7 minutes.
Set aside, sprinkled with cinnamon sugar.
Heat butter over low heat in a heavy, deep skillet.
Ladle in a little less than ¼ the batter.
When firm pocks rise to the surface, place ¼ of the apples on top.
Ladle a bit more batter, cover, and cook until set.
Flip over, and allow to cook, uncovered, until lightly browned. Remove and keep warm.
Repeat for the rest of the batter.
Serve warm with whipped cream, if desired.

GHANA

Ghana is a Western African country, formerly known as the Gold Coast. A British colony until 1957, it was the first African colony to attain its independence after World War II. Located on the Gulf of Guinea, between Togo and Cote d'Ivoire, the country is warm and relatively benign along the coast, enabling numerous tropical fruits and vegetables to be raised. Ghana is also a world leader in growing and exporting cocoa.

The population comprises numerous ethnic groups, the largest of which is the Akan. Until the conquest by Britain, many of these groups were organized into complex kingdoms, whose rituals are still remnant today, notably among the Ashanti, one of the largest groups.

Ghanaian cooking is based on stiff porridge staples eaten with peanut-based sauces.

Foodstuffs

- Millet, sorghum, and cassava are the principal crops, and serve as the main ingredients of meals. Common staples are *banku* and *kenkey* (see Angola for the box "African Staple"), fermented versions of the stiff porridge-like staple eaten all over sub-Saharan Africa.
- The most common meats are goat, chicken, and beef, when available.
- Fish and other marine life are taken from the rivers as well as the sea. Dried salted small fish are important flavoring ingredients for most cooked dishes.
- A variety of vegetables are raised, including tomatoes, eggplants, peppers (sweet and hot varieties), and okra. Greens, such as taro leaves (called *konto-mire*), and various mushrooms gathered from the wild are prized. Peanuts are used for flavoring and on their own.
- Fruits are raised by farmers for local consumption and for export. The three most important crops are cocoa, plantains and other bananas, and coffee.
- Drinks include cocoa, coffee, fruit juices, and beer—both commercial and home-brewed—from traditional grains or bananas.
- Seasonings: palm oil and palm butter; ground peanuts; *shitor din* (chili table condiment); dried or smoked fish and shrimp.

Typical Dishes

- Groundnut and other stews are eaten as side dishes along with the cooked carbohydrate staple.
- The staple porridge is first fermented, giving it a characteristic sour flavor.
- Fish and seafood are baked, fried, or stewed with vegetables such as okra or taro leaves.

Styles of Eating

- People try to eat three meals a day.
- Families eat together sitting on a mat around a bowl of the staple and some side dishes, which are shared. Many men are polygynous. In such a case, each wife cooks for herself and her children, and in rotation for the shared husband. The food is brought to the husband's house by the wife's child.
- Breakfast usually consists of a porridge, or fried bread, or the leftovers from the evening meal.
- The midday meal depends on the individual's occupation and resources.
- The evening meal is composed of a staple, and a sauce of vegetables and meat, often flavored with dried fish.
- Eating out is common. Cafés and restaurants usually serve European style.

Plantain Cakes (Tatale)

These are generally served as appetizers or snacks, and best eaten while hot and fresh.

2 over-ripe plantains (black and soft)
1 small onion, minced fine
1–2 ounces self-rising flour
1 tsp palm oil
salt and chili pepper to taste
oil for deep-frying

Peel and mash the plantains until smooth.
Mix with onion, palm oil, seasoning and flour.
Let rest for 20 minutes.
Heat enough oil for deep frying in a pan.
Drop a few spoonfuls at a time into the hot oil and fry until golden brown; do not crowd the pan.
Drain on paper towels and keep hot in the oven while frying the rest.

Spinach Stew (Palava Sauce)

"Palava" comes from the word "palaver," but in West Africa it means trouble. Perhaps the name was applied because the original recipe's multiple steps needed several pots. The following recipe is much simplified. This is often made just with

beans or pumpkin seeds to eat with a staple. It may also accompany a meat dish. Palm oil imparts a red color to food, and if desired, turmeric (yellow) or paprika (red) can be added to give the same effect.

4 TBS palm or corn or peanut oil
2 tsp turmeric or paprika (if not using palm oil)
1 onion, chopped
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 pound meat, chicken, or dried or smoked fish, cut into bite-size pieces, or 4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled and quartered (optional)
salt to taste
1 tsp grated nutmeg
1 red chili pepper, seeded and chopped (or 3 drops hot chili sauce) (optional)
1 cup water
1 pound spinach (substitute kale or other greens), chopped
1 cup cooked kidney or other beans, drained (or 1 cup pumpkin seeds, blended to a smooth paste with 1 cup water)

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. (Stir in paprika.)
Stir in onion and fry until softened, then stir in tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.
Add meat, fish, or eggs (if using), salt, nutmeg, and a cup of water.
Simmer for 20–30 minutes (10 minutes for eggs), or until meat is tender.
Gently stir in spinach and beans or pumpkin seed paste.
Taste and correct seasoning, and add a bit of water if too thick.
Simmer for 5–7 minutes until spinach is cooked but still green.
Serve over *banku* or *kenkey* (see Angola for the box "African Staple").

Crab Sauce (Fante Kotokyim)

Ghana has a long coastline and many rivers. Fish and seafood, including small crustaceans, are a major source of protein for many people.

2 TBS palm oil, other vegetable oil, or butter
1 onion, chopped
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 pound crab or lobster meat, fresh, frozen, or canned, cut in bite-sized pieces (or substitute imitation crab legs)
½ tsp fresh ginger, grated
¼ tsp white pepper
½ tsp salt
¼ pint water

Heat oil over medium heat, and cook onion and tomatoes over low heat for 5 minutes.
Stir in crab or lobster meat, ginger, pepper, salt, and water.
Simmer gently for 10–15 minutes.
Serve over *banku* or *kenkey* (see Angola for the box "African Staple").

Hot Pepper Sauce (Shitor Din)

This condiment is served with many Ghanaian dishes, and helps define Ghanaian cooking. Sometimes it is used as an ingredient in a dish.

2 cups vegetable oil
1 onion, finely chopped
4 TBS fresh ginger, grated
4 TBS tomato paste
1 chicken stock cube
1 cup dried shrimp, left whole
5 TBS dried shrimp (ground in a blender or food processor)
1–2 dried chili peppers, seeded (ground with shrimp in blender)
salt to taste

Heat oil over medium heat. Fry onion until softened.
Stir in ginger, tomato paste, and crumbled stock cube.
Lower heat; stir in dried whole and powdered shrimp with chili.
Cook for 2 minutes, stirring well. Turn off heat and leave to cool.
Store in a covered jar, refrigerated.
Topped with 1–2 tablespoons of vegetable oil, the sauce will keep for several months.
Serve with anything as a table condiment, or use during cooking.

Festive Yam Dish (Oto)

This dish is served by the Akan people on almost all special occasions: to celebrate births, mourn deaths, and to approach the spirits, who, generally speaking, do not like spiced or seasoned foods.

1 yam about 2 pounds (true yam, not sweet potato)
6 eggs
½ cup palm oil (substitute other vegetable oil plus 1 tsp turmeric or paprika)
salt to taste
(optional: 1 small onion, very finely minced, and red pepper to taste)

Peel and wash yam. Cut into 2-inch cubes.
Place yam and eggs into a pot, and cover with lightly salted water.
Boil until yam is tender and eggs hard-boiled (about 10–15 minutes).
Remove yams from water, and mash until smooth.
Add salt and palm oil to yam mash, and mix well (you may mix in the onion and red pepper if spirits are not invited).
Peel the eggs and slice into quarters.
Mound mashed yam on a serving dish, surrounded by egg slices.

Eggs with Gari (Gari Foto)

This is served for breakfast or lunch, accompanied by *shitor din* (chili sauce). *Gari* is cassava paste.

2 cups *gari* (see Angola for the box "African Staple") (substitute instant mashed potato powder)
½ cup warm water
½ cup cooking oil (preferably palm oil or peanut oil)
1 onion, finely chopped
½ cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 clove garlic, minced
6 eggs, beaten
salt and black pepper to taste

Prepare *gari*. Place it in a bowl. Sprinkle with water to evenly moisten it (it may not be necessary to use all the water), while stirring with a fork. Cover with a clean cloth and set aside.
Heat oil in a pan. Fry onion until soft. Add tomatoes and cook for a few more minutes until well blended.
Stir in the eggs, and cook until done but still moist.
Fold in prepared *gari*.
Remove from heat. Season to taste.
Serve immediately with *shitor din* or tomato ketchup with a few drops of chili sauce (if desired).

Spicy Fried Plantains (Kelewele)

This is a popular street food eaten as a snack at any time of day.

½ tsp fresh ginger, grated
½ tsp cayenne or red pepper
1 tsp salt
2 TBS water
4–6 ripe plantains, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks (or substitute green, unripe, eating bananas).
oil for deep-frying

Mix well the ginger, pepper, salt, and water.
In a bowl, place the plantain cubes, and stir in the spice mixture to coat.
Let stand for 15–20 minutes.
Heat enough oil for deep-frying to 350°F.
Fry plantains a few at a time until golden brown on both sides. Do not crowd the pan.
Drain on paper towels or on a rack, keep in a warmed oven until all the plantains are fried.
Serve immediately.

Cinnamon Bananas

Though desserts are not commonly eaten, Ghanaians do like sweet foods, which are eaten between meals.

1 tsp flour
½ tsp powdered cinnamon
4 small ripe bananas, peeled and cut in half lengthwise
pinch of salt
1 egg, beaten
½ cup bread crumbs
2 TBS peanut oil

Mix flour and cinnamon and coat the banana pieces.
Dip into salted beaten egg, and then into bread crumbs.
Heat the oil in a baking pan, and when faintly smoking, carefully put in the bananas (take care not to get splattered with the hot oil). Baste bananas well.
Bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes or until brown and soft.

GREECE

Greece is comprised of a peninsula and several archipelagoes in the Mediterranean in southern Europe. The countryside is dry Mediterranean with rocky hills and fertile valleys. The climate is warm in the winter, hot in the summer, and crops are drought-resistant olives, apricots, figs, and other typically Mediterranean produce.

Originating in Ancient Greece, modern Greek cuisine has been heavily influenced by Turkey, which ruled Greece for four centuries. Most Greeks belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, and its festivals are celebrated with special foods for the season.

Foodstuffs

- Greek food is characterized by four main foodstuffs: lamb or mutton, fish and seafood, wheat products, and olive products.
- Lamb, mutton, young kid, and pork are the preferred meats. Greek lamb, naturally flavored by grazing on rosemary and other herbs, is famous.
- Greece produces a variety of breads, ranging from flat breads like pita, through to elaborate creations made for weddings and Easter. Barley is sometimes used, but wheat is more common, and is also eaten in the form of pasta.
- Greece produces many dairy products from cow's and ewe's milk (preferred). This includes a variety of thick yogurts, cheese, including the well-known *feta* cheese, and other products.
- Greek farmers raise a variety of sub-tropical fruits and vegetables. Vegetables include tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, peppers (mainly sweet), zucchini, eggplant, onions, and garlic.
- Fruits include particularly figs and grapes, as well as plums, peaches, and soft fruits.

Typical Dishes

- For everyday meals, lamb is braised and stewed in casseroles with assorted vegetables, and skewered or broiled. Pork, beef, and game are marinated, grilled, and baked. Chicken is broiled or braised.
- Street foods such as *souvlaki* (lamb or pork mince grilled on a vertical spit) and *falafel*, eaten in pita are very common.

- *Dolmades*: stuffed vegetables—grape leaves, tomatoes, potatoes—are served as an appetizer, or *meze*.
- Eggs cooked with tomatoes make a breakfast or light meal.
- Chopped eggplant with tomatoes and onions.
- Stuffed baked breast of lamb.
- *Spanakopitta* (spinach and cheese pie).
- Drinks include resin-flavored wine, beer, soda water, and a variety of soda pops.

Styles of Eating

- Place settings are a variation of European standard.
- Families often eat together, most notably in the evening.
- Many Greek meals, and most informal snacks are served as a *meze*: a selection of small dishes of appetizers including stuffed vegetables, sauces, cooked vegetables, olives, and preserved meats.
- Wine, most often pine resin flavored *retsina* is commonly drunk with meals by all. Very sweet, strong coffee is popularly served in small cups with a sweet pastry and a glass of soda water.

Stuffed Tomatoes
(Domates Yemistes)

In common with much of the Levant, Greek cuisine glories in numerous stuffed and baked vegetables.

4 large tomatoes
⅔ cup cooked rice
2 TBS onion, chopped
1 TBS raisins, soaked to plump
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 TBS fresh mint, minced (reserve 2 TBS for garnish)
salt, black pepper to taste
1 tsp sugar
¾ cup olive oil

Cut tops off tomatoes, reserving the tops. Scoop out flesh.
Chop tomato flesh, discarding the seeds. Combine with rice, onion, raisins, garlic, mint, salt, and pepper. Mix well.
Sprinkle a bit of salt and sugar into the tomato shells.
Stuff shells with rice mixture and arrange in oven-proof casserole. Pour oil over tomatoes. Replace lids on tomatoes.
Cover and bake at 350°F for 25–30 minutes.
Sprinkle with reserved mint.
Serve as starter or part of a *meze*.

Baked Vegetables (Lathero Fayi)

These are often served as appetizers, or as an accompaniment to a fish, chicken, or meat main dish.

1 large onion, cut in ¼-inch rings
4 medium zucchini, cut in ¼-inch disks
3 medium potatoes, cut in ¼-inch disks
1 medium tomato, cut in ¼-inch disks
6 cloves garlic, peeled whole
⅓ cup olive oil
⅓ cup chopped parsley
salt and pepper to taste
2 TBS oregano, fresh, minced

Layer onion loosely on the bottom of a heavy baking tray.
Follow with a layer of zucchini and potatoes. Top with a layer of tomatoes. Season each layer as it is laid down.
Drizzle oil over top. Vegetables should be well coated: do not hesitate to add more olive oil if necessary.
Bake for about 1 hour at 370°F.
Remove from oven and sprinkle with oregano. Allow to rest for 10 minutes, covered with foil, before serving.

Chicken Casserole

This is often served as a main dish.

4 chicken breasts, quarters, or legs
5 potatoes, peeled and cut in thick strips (like French fries)
1 garlic bulb, cloves peeled and left whole
juice of 3 lemons
½ cup olive oil
½ TBS oregano
½ cup water
salt and pepper to taste

Place chicken in a shallow baking tray.
Arrange potatoes around chicken. Scatter whole garlic cloves around chicken and potatoes.
Mix lemon juice and olive oil, and beat in oregano. Pour evenly over dish.
Add water and season. Cover loosely with foil.
Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking until tops of chicken are lightly browned.
Turn chicken, stir potatoes. Return to oven for about 15–20 minutes. Dish is done when both sides of chicken are browned and when pierced, juices run clear, and the potatoes are soft.
Remove from oven, sprinkle additional fresh oregano if desired, and drizzle with olive oil.
Serve with crusty bread.

Eggs and Tomatoes (Avga Matia Me Saltsa Domatas)

This can be served for breakfast or a light evening meal.

5 TBS olive oil
1 pound tomatoes, peeled and chopped, juice removed (or 2 cans chopped tomatoes, drained)
salt and pepper to taste
4 eggs
1 TBS parsley, minced fine

Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add tomatoes and salt and cook, mashing the pulp, until thickened.
Break eggs into a dish. Season, and ease gently into the pan, taking care not to break the yolks.
When cooked—yolks should be slightly runny—serve with the sauce in which they were cooked, garnish with parsley.
Serve immediately with fried potatoes or crusty bread.

Meatballs with Lemon Sauce (Keftedes me Avgolemono Saltsa)

In Greek cuisine, the lemon is a prime source of flavoring, particularly for meat and fish dishes. This is served as a main dish for dinner.

1 pound ground beef
¼ cup onion, chopped fine
1 heaping TBS rice, uncooked
1 heaping TBS parsley, chopped
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
cold water, as needed
3 cups beef stock (or 1½ bouillon cubes dissolved in 3 cups hot water)
1 TBS olive oil
2 eggs
⅛ cup lemon juice
⅛ tsp salt
1 TBS parsley, chopped (for sauce)

Combine beef, onion, rice, parsley, salt, and pepper with ¼ cup water. Shape mixture into balls, 1½ inches in diameter.
Bring to a boil the bouillon and olive oil in a large pot.
Slip meatballs, one at a time, into the boiling liquid.
Return to boiling. Reduce heat, and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes.
Meanwhile, beat eggs with 2 tablespoons cold water on top of a double boiler, over hot water, until mixture is fluffy.
Slowly ladle ¼ cup hot bouillon from the pot onto the eggs, beating constantly and adding only a bit of liquid at a time.
Stir in lemon juice. Cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce thickens. Season.
Remove from heat; let stand over hot water 5 minutes before serving.
Remove meatballs with slotted spoon to a serving dish.
Ladle sauce over meatballs. Sprinkle with chopped parsley.
Serve with plain boiled rice.

Twisted Loaf and Rolls (Koulouria to Koulourakia)

Bread plays a major part in the diet in Greece, and is eaten with most meals. These are traditional at Easter. The larger *koulouria* loaf is often twisted around a red Easter egg.

2 TBS dry yeast
½ cup warm water
3 TBS sugar (6 TBS if making *koulourakia*)
2 cups milk
3 TBS butter
¾ tsp salt
7 cups flour
1 egg, beaten
1 egg yolk, well beaten
¼ cup sesame seeds

Dissolve yeast in warm water sprinkled with a pinch of sugar. Set aside. Scald milk. Add sugar, butter, and salt. Let milk mixture cool to body temperature.

In a food processor, put flour, milk mixture, yeast, and egg and mix just until it forms a dough.

Remove dough and knead on a lightly floured surface until smooth and elastic.

Grease a bowl, place dough, and cover with damp towel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled (about 4 hours).

Punch down dough. Knead briefly.

If making a large *koulouria* loaf, divide dough into three.

On a lightly floured surface, roll and shape each into a long stick about 10–12 inches long and 1 inch in diameter.

Join the sticks together at one end by firmly pressing and braid.

Shape the braided loaf into a circle and place on a greased 10-inch diameter round baking pan.

Firmly seal the joint with beaten egg yolk.

Brush the top of the loaf with beaten egg yolk, and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

To make the smaller *koulourakia* (the suffix "*akia*" means "small") rolls, divide the dough into six.

On a lightly floured surface, roll and shape into sticks about 6 inches long.

Take each stick and form into a ring.

Seal the joint with beaten egg yolk.

Brush the surface of the rings with beaten egg yolk, and scatter sesame seeds over.

Place shaped rings well apart on a greased baking tray.

Let rise in a warm place for 1 hour, or until doubled.

Bake in the middle of a preheated oven at 375°F for 20–30 minutes, or until just lightly golden, but not browned.

Remove from oven; allow to cool for 10 minutes, and remove from pan to continue cooling on a rack.

Jam Layer Cookies (Biscota Thipla me Marmelada)

This is eaten as a snack and is also often served for birthdays and other joyous occasions.

4 eggs, separated
1 cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 cups flour, sifted
3 tsp baking powder
½ cup butter, melted
1 cup milk
2 cups apricot jam

Beat egg yolks with sugar and vanilla extract.
In a food processor, place flour, baking powder, yolk mixture, and melted butter.
Gently process into a soft dough by adding the milk gradually. Stop processing as soon as the mixture comes together.
Let dough rest for 10 minutes.
Butter a cookie sheet.
On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to a ¼-inch thick rectangle. Cut into 1-inch rounds.
Place rounds on cookie sheet.
Beat egg whites and brush over cookies.
Bake in a preheated 300°F oven for 10–15 minutes until golden.
Remove from the cookie sheet and cool on a rack.
When completely cold, spoon ½ tsp jam onto half the cookies and top with the others.

GRENADA

Located between the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, Grenada consists of three islands—Grenada, Carriacou, and Petit Martinique—that became independent in 1974 but remain within the British Commonwealth. Grenada's culture mixes British, African, East Indian, and French influences from its history as a French, then British colony. This influence is reflected in Grenadan cooking. Grenadans are predominantly of African origin and although English is the official language, a French patois (dialect) is also spoken.

Nutmeg and mace (the nutmeg kernel's lacy covering) are Grenada's foremost products, earning it the name "Isle of Spice." Other tropical fruits and vegetables flourish in the rich volcanic soil, notably cocoa.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: beans, rice, yams, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, and cassava.
- Fruits and vegetables: mango, pumpkin, squash, *dasheen* or *callaloo* (taro root and leaves), leafy greens (*munga*), christophene, eggplant (*melongene*), dessert banana (fig banana or *bluggo*), plantain, peas, coconut, passion fruit. Other fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, including juices, imported from the United States.
- Breadfruit is used in many ways: as a vegetable like potato; as a cereal (made into flour); and the flower eaten with sugar.
- Goat, fish, and seafood such as conch (*lambi*), crab, shrimp, sea urchin, roe, marlin, tuna, barracuda, king fish.
- Game such as armadillo, iguana, turtle meat and eggs are eaten.
- Some meat (pork, beef) and poultry products are imported from the United States.
- Seasonings: various spices, hot peppers, herbs (thyme, chives, bay leaf).

Typical Dishes

- Oil-down: a stew of breadfruit and various vegetables, salted meat and/or chicken in coconut milk with spices.
- One-pot rice dishes: red beans and rice, pigeon peas and rice
- Soups are popular: *callalou* soup, breadfruit soup. Fish or seafood are made into soup (fish broth, *lambi* waters) or stews (curried conch) or fried. Meat and chicken stews with vegetables (cowheel soup, curry goat, pig souse).

- *Coo-coo* (savory corn or breadfruit pudding).
- Celebrations on the beach or cook-ups feature soups or stews, barbecued meats.
- Snacks: *roti* (pan-baked quick bread of East Indian origin) filled with vegetable or meat curry, breadfruit chips, fried bananas or plantains, tamarind *(tambran)* balls, roast corn.
- Sweets: Ice cream made from tropical fruits.
- Drinks: sea moss (made with seaweed, milk, nutmeg, and lime), tropical fruit milkshakes, *bois bande* (made of tree bark).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks.
- Grenadans traditionally eat most meals at home.
- Breakfast: fried bread (bakes) with fish cakes made of salt cod or *titiri* (tiny sea fish) or fried jacks (a popular fish), and bush tea (from black sage leaves).
- Lunch: *callalloo* soup, *roti* with curry sauce or stew-fish, dessert of avocado or nutmeg ice cream.
- Dinner: same as lunch.
- Weekend brunch: black pudding and salt fish souse, which are eaten with johnny bakes.

Oil-Down

This robust meat and vegetable stew, pronounced "oil dung," is the national dish, extremely popular at local "cook-ups" or barbecue parties on the beach. The name comes from the dish being cooked down until all the liquid is absorbed, leaving a very thick sauce. It is usually served with a cabbage salad or a puree of okra, locally called "ochro slush."

½ pound salt pork or unsmoked back bacon
1 medium onion, chopped
1 sprig each celery, parsley, thyme, chopped
2 green onions or 10 chives, chopped
1 whole hot pepper (optional)
2 cups water
1 large breadfruit, cored and cut into 6–8 sections; or 5 large potatoes, quartered
2 medium carrots, chopped
½ pound corn dumplings (follows this recipe)
2–4 cups coconut milk
2 TBS turmeric or curry powder
8–10 young dasheen leaves or 1 cup frozen spinach, thawed and drained

Soak salt pork in water and refrigerate overnight to get rid of excess salt. Drain and discard water.

In a heavy stewing pot, simmer meat with onions, herbs, hot pepper, and water for about 15 minutes.

Add breadfruit, carrots, dumplings, coconut milk, turmeric, and dasheen leaves (if spinach is substituted, add during the last 5 minutes of cooking).

Cook covered over low heat till all the water is absorbed and the vegetables are tender but not mushy.
Stir occasionally and check that the stew is not sticking to the bottom of the pot.

Corn Dumplings

1 cup plain flour
½ cup cornmeal
½ tsp salt
water

In a bowl, mix flour, cornmeal, and salt with a little water to make a stiff dough.
Knead lightly and roll into balls or cylinders. Drop into boiling salted water, or as directed in oil-down recipe above, and cook for about 15 minutes.

Cinnamon Fried Bananas

This is served as a dessert or a snack.

4 semi-ripe bananas
5 TBS cinnamon and sugar (mixed)
3 TBS butter

Slice bananas in half lengthwise.
Gently heat butter in a skillet and fry banana slices on both sides until slightly brown.
Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar while frying.
Serve warm with ice cream or cream.

Roast Pork

This pork dish can be served hot with rice and beans and a vegetable salad, or cold with a bean salad (see the following recipe).

1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 bay leaves, crumbled
1½ tsp salt
¾ tsp allspice
¾ tsp powdered ginger
¼ tsp black pepper
1½ pounds boneless pork

Sauce

1½ cups fresh orange juice
¼ cup minced onion
3 TBS brown sugar
2 TBS minced fresh ginger
2 bay leaves
½ tsp allspice
black pepper to taste

(*continued*)

Garnish

lettuce leaves
2 avocados, pitted and sliced crosswise, drizzled with lemon juice to prevent browning
minced fresh parsley

Combine onion, garlic, bay leaves, salt, allspice, ginger, and pepper in a bowl. Rub mixture thoroughly into pork and leave to marinate for 1 hour or overnight in the fridge.
Preheat oven to 350°F. Set pork on rack in roasting pan.
Roast pork for 1½ to 2 hours or until done.
To make the sauce: in a saucepan, combine all the ingredients and simmer until slightly thickened, for about 15 minutes.
To serve: Line a dish with lettuce. Slice the pork into serving portions. Alternate pork and avocado slices. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve sauce alongside, to be drizzled by each diner over pork and avocado.

Corn and Black Bean Salad

A salad served to accompany a meat or other main dish.

2 cups frozen corn, thawed, drained
1 8-ounce can black beans, rinsed, drained
2 tomatoes, seeded, diced
½ red onion, minced
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 red bell pepper
1 green bell pepper
¼ cup olive oil
juice of one lime
salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Chill until ready to serve.

West Indies Plum Pudding

The recipe originates with British mariners for whom plum pudding was a traditional luxury. In Grenada it was adapted to local taste and conditions. Traditionally, this pudding was made with beef suet (here, butter is used) and three kinds of alcohol: rum, wine, and brandy. The dried fruits would be soaked in ½ cup to 1 cup rum for a week. Here, they are soaked in orange juice instead. Half a cup each of wine and brandy would be added to the batter before baking, and just before serving, more brandy would be poured over the pudding and lit up as it was brought to the table. This recipe is alcohol-free.

½ pound raisins
½ pound currants
4 ounces candied orange or lemon peel (or both), chopped
½ cup orange juice
½ pound stale bread, cubed
½ pint milk
1 cup butter
4 ounces brown sugar
3 eggs
1 cup orange juice
⅛ tsp each nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, cloves

In a covered dish, put raisins, currants, peel, and orange juice and store in the refrigerator for 2–3 days.
Preheat oven to 325°F.
Soak bread in warmed milk for 10 minutes to soften.
Cream butter and brown sugar thoroughly.
Add eggs and mix well.
Stir in prepared fruit with soaking liquid, orange juice, and spices.
Turn into a greased 2-quart baking dish with tight-fitting cover (otherwise, cover with foil securely fastened around dish so that moisture cannot get in).
Place the baking dish into a larger baking pan in the middle shelf of the oven.
Pour boiling water into the pan, two-thirds of the way up the baking dish. Check that there is always water in the pan: add more hot water as necessary.
Bake for 1 hour or until cake tests done (a skewer stuck into the middle should come out dry).

GUATEMALA

Guatemala, the largest country in Central America, is a former Spanish colony that became independent in 1821.

Two-thirds mountainous, its fertile, hot, humid plains on the Pacific and Caribbean coasts produce cattle, sugar, coffee, and tropical fruits. Its northern rainforests yield chewing gum.

Over half the population is Amerindian (Maya) with a vibrant culture and some adopted European customs. The other half are descendants of Europeans, mainly Hispanic, and Africans. Guatemalan food blends Spanish, Amerindian, and European influences.

Foodstuffs

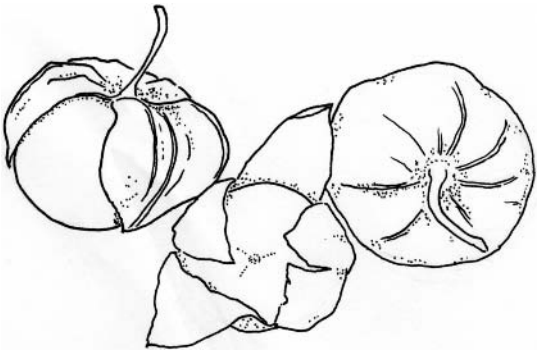
- Staples: beans and corn, usually grown on family land.
- Meat: fish and seafood, beef, chicken, pork.
- Vegetables: pumpkin, avocado, tomato, radish, hot chili, and bell pepper.
- Fruits: banana, plantain, pineapple, mango, Spanish plum (*jocote*), mamey apple.
- Seasonings: cilantro, pumpkin seeds, and sesame seeds are often used for sauces.

Typical Dishes

- Beans in various forms: in soup, as fried-bean paste, cooked with rice, or in stews.
- Corn: ground into cornmeal and grilled to make tortillas, best cooked traditionally, on a metal sheet (*comale*) over a fire; made into steamed dumplings (*tamales*).
- *Tamales*: bits of chicken, pork, corn paste, or potatoes steamed in banana leaves.
- Rice dishes: chicken-rice dish with onion, garlic, tomatoes, peppers, and seasonal vegetables (*arroz con pollo chapina*).
- Spanish-style sweets: egg-rich custard (*flan*), rice cakes, honey crisps, sugared figs, fried dumplings coated with honey (*buñuelos*), ripe plantains with chocolate sauce, honey-cinnamon syrups, or with orange juice and whipped cream.
- Drinks: fruit juices; beer, rum, and wine are brewed locally; a punch made from milk, egg yolks and rum (*rompopo*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: porridge or tortillas with beans, eggs, fried plantain, and a cup of coffee or chocolate-coffee.
- Lunch: a large meal with soup, meat or chicken, rice, vegetables and salad; dessert of sweets or fruit.
- Evening: light meal similar to breakfast, or leftovers from the midday meal or sweet bread and a hot drink; dessert of sweets or fruit.
- Snacks: mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon, hot drink with sweet pastry or tamales (steamed dumpling of cornmeal filled with vegetables, meat, or cheese).



TOMATILLO

Chocolate-Coffee (Champurrado)

The flavors of locally grown cocoa, coffee, and cinnamon are well-blended in this soothing hot drink, usually served at breakfast, but also drunk in between meals with a snack.

4 TBS cocoa
4 TBS sugar
2 TBS cornstarch
pinch of salt
1 TBS cinnamon
2 cups milk
2 TBS butter
2 cups freshly brewed coffee
1 tsp vanilla
additional cinnamon for garnish

In a saucepan, combine cocoa, sugar, cornstarch, salt, and cinnamon.
Slowly add the milk, blending it well into the dry ingredients so that lumps do not form.
Heat the milk and cocoa mixture gently over low heat until small bubbles rise around the sides of the pan. Do not allow to boil.
Quickly stir in the butter, coffee, and vanilla.
Turn off the heat.
To serve, pour into cups and sprinkle cinnamon over. Diners may add more sugar if they wish.

Radish Salad (Salada de Rabano)

Salads are commonly served together with a main dish.

15 small red radishes, trimmed and sliced thinly
10 fresh mint leaves, finely chopped

(*continued*)

salt to taste
juice of ½ small orange
juice of ½ small lemon

In a bowl, combine radishes with remaining ingredients. Chill for 30 minutes and serve with a meat or chicken dish, or with rice and beans.

Potato and Green Bean Salad (Iguashte)

The *tomatillo* is commonly used in Guatemala, but tomatoes can substitute.

1 cup squash seeds
1 TBS oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup *tomatillos* or green tomatoes, chopped
salt to taste
2 cups frozen sliced green beans, thawed, drained
1 pound potatoes, peeled, cubed, and boiled

In a skillet, dry fry the squash seeds over low heat for about 10 minutes until lightly browned. Set aside.
In the same skillet, add oil and lightly fry the garlic.
Process the squash seeds and garlic with the green tomatoes (or husked and sliced *tomatillos*) until smooth. Add a bit of water if the sauce is too thick.
Season with salt to taste.
Boil 3 cups of salted water. Add green beans and briefly cook, about 3 minutes.
Immediately drain green beans and plunge into cold water to stop further cooking.
Toss the potatoes and green beans with the sauce.
Refrigerate for 1 hour or more before serving.

Chicken in Green Sauce (Jocon)

This well-flavored stew is eaten at noon or evening. Serve with rice and/or fresh hot tortillas, with radish salad or other vegetable salad.

4 pieces chicken legs or quarters
2 cups water
1 tsp salt
2 tortillas, torn into pieces
3 TBS squash seeds
½ cup sesame seeds
1 cup cilantro, packed
1 cup sliced green onions, green part only
½ cup sliced *tomatillos* or green tomatoes
1 green chili pepper (optional)
2 TBS corn oil

In a covered saucepan, cook the chicken with the water and salt for about 15 minutes.
When cool, discard the chicken skins but keep the broth and soak the tortillas in it.
In a skillet, dry fry the squash seeds and sesame seeds over low heat until lightly colored, about 10 minutes.
To prepare sauce: process to a smooth paste the squash and sesame seeds, cilantro, green onions, *tomatillos*, hot chili pepper, the soaked tortillas and 1 cup of broth. Set aside.
In a skillet, heat the corn oil over moderate heat and brown the chicken pieces for about 5 minutes.
Add the green sauce and any remaining broth.
Simmer over low heat for 15 minutes, until the sauce is thick and rich.

Warm Fruit Salad (Ponche de Frutas)

Guatemala's fruits are combined in this dessert. Other seasonal fruits can be substituted.

⅔ cup sugar
3 cups water
1 cinnamon stick
1 small fresh pineapple, peeled, cored, and cubed
1 cup raisins
1 cup pitted prunes or dried apricots, cubed
2 small apples, peeled and cubed
1 firm semi-ripe papaya, peeled and cubed

In a saucepan, simmer the sugar, water, and cinnamon for about 10 minutes.
Add all the fruits and simmer covered for 20 minutes.
Serve warm.

GUINEA

This West African country on the Atlantic coast is a former French colony. Mostly flat on the coast, mountainous inland with a tropical climate, rice, and other staples, fruits, vegetables are raised for local consumption.

There are three large ethnic groups–the Peuhl, Malinke, and Soussou–and several smaller ones. The majority of the population are Muslims (thus pork is not eaten). Local cuisine is influenced by North African and French elements.

Foodstuffs

- Rice, cassava, and bananas are the principle crops, and serve as the main ingredients of meals.
- The most common meats are goat, chicken, and beef. Pork is usually unavailable.
- Fish and other marine life are taken from the rivers and from the sea. Dried salted small fish are an important flavoring ingredient for most cooked dishes.
- A variety of vegetables are raised, including tomatoes, eggplants, peppers (sweet and hot varieties), and okra. Peanuts are used for flavoring and on their own.
- Fruit are raised by farmers for local consumption. These include avocados, bananas, pineapples, and other tropical fruit.
- Palm oil and palm butter are important ingredients.

Typical Dishes

- *Jollof* rice is a common dish throughout West Africa.
- *Bâtons de manioc* (steamed packages of cassava flour) are a common staple. Rice is for more luxurious or special dining.
- Groundnut and other stews are eaten as side dishes along with the cooked carbohydrate staple.
- *Ngumbo* (cooked okra) is commonly eaten for any meal.
- Drinks include water, tea, coffee, and a variety of local fruit juices and soda pops.

Styles of Eating

- People try to eat three meals a day.
- Families eat together sitting on a mat around a bowl of the staple and some side dishes, which are shared.

- Breakfast usually consists of a porridge, or fried bread, or the leftovers from the evening meal.
- The midday meal depends on the individual's occupation and resources.
- The evening meal is composed of a staple, and a sauce of vegetables and meat, often flavored with dried fish.
- Eating out is common. Cafes and restaurants usually serve European style.

Chicken in Cumin Sauce

Cumin, a commonly used spice in Africa, was originally brought by Arab traders. This dish may well have originally used guinea fowl, native to Guinean forests. Unlike chicken, guinea fowl have dark flesh. This stew is eaten for the main meal.

1 onion, chopped
¼ cup tomato paste
2 cups fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
3–4 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp cumin
salt and cayenne pepper to taste
4 chicken quarters or legs

Combine onion, tomato paste, chopped tomatoes, garlic, cumin, salt, and cayenne in a saucepan. Stir to mix well.
Bring slowly to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Add chicken, cover, and simmer for ½ hour or more, stirring occasionally, until chicken is tender. Add a little water if the sauce becomes too thick.
Serve with *fufu*, *chikwangue* (see Angola for the box "African Staple"), or rice.

Meat Stew (Kansiyé)

This is another main meal stew whose ingredients vary, depending on what's available.

3 TBS oil
1 pound beef or kid, cubed, or 4 chicken legs
1 large onion, chopped
½ tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper
⅛ tsp thyme
2 cloves garlic, crushed
3 TBS parsley, very finely minced
1 whole clove, crushed
⅔ cup tomato paste
3 cups water
3 TBS smooth natural peanut butter

Heat oil in a heavy pan and brown meat.
Add onion, salt, pepper, thyme, garlic, parsley, and clove.
Combine tomato paste with 2 cups water; add to seasoned meat and mix well.

(*continued*)

Dilute peanut butter with remaining water and add to mixture.
Simmer for 30–45 minutes, or until meat is tender.
Serve hot over *fufu* or rice.

Jollof *Rice* (*Guinean Version*)

This is a very popular and common West African dish. Guinean cooks are in great demand throughout Western Africa because of this dish (which is claimed to be the "national dish" in several localities).

2 cups water
4 chicken legs or quarters
2 cans (about 2 pounds) chopped tomatoes
salt to taste
¼ tsp black pepper
1 cup uncooked rice
1 large onion, sliced
3 cups cabbage, shredded
½ pound fresh green beans, trimmed and quartered (or 1 package frozen sliced green beans, defrosted and drained)
¼ tsp cinnamon powder
¼ tsp cayenne pepper

Put water, chicken, tomatoes, salt, and black pepper in a large sauce pan.
Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
Stir in rice, onion, cabbage, green beans, cinnamon, and cayenne pepper.
Bring to a boil again, then reduce heat to lowest.
Cover and simmer until the chicken is tender and the rice is cooked, about 20–25 minutes.
Serve as a main meal.

Fish and Greens

Any kind of fish or greens will work for this dish, which is served with the staple.

⅓ cup palm oil (or substitute other vegetable oil)
1 fish, about 2 lb. cut into serving-size pieces (wiped dry to prevent splattering during frying)
1 clove garlic, minced
1 onion, chopped
1 cup water
1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
1 pound spinach (or collards or kale, blanched), chopped
salt and chili pepper to taste

Heat oil in a deep saucepan and fry the fish on all sides. Set aside.
Drain off oil, leaving just 2 tablespoons.
Stir in the garlic and onion; and cook until softened.

Add water, tomatoes, spinach, salt, and chili pepper to taste.
Simmer for 5–7 minutes or until spinach is done but still green.
Serve with *bâtons de manioc*, *fufu*, or rice.

Okra and Greens (Ngumbo)

Okra was domesticated in prehistoric times and is a common staple throughout Africa. Keep in mind that the smaller you cut the pods, the more glutinous the end result. In the Twi language okra is called *nkruma*, which became okra in English and Arabic.

2 TBS palm oil (or other vegetable oil)
1 onion, chopped
1 cup water
1 pound greens (cassava leaves, kale, collards, cabbage, or spinach), stems removed and shredded
20 okra pods
2 cups palm butter or *nyembwe* sauce, or canned palm soup base (available from African stores, or substitute ½ cup smooth natural peanut butter)
2 chili peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped (optional)
salt to taste

Heat oil over medium heat in a heavy saucepan.
Sauté onion until softened.
Add water and bring to a boil.
Add greens, okra, palm butter, chilies, and salt to taste.
Cook until all is tender, between 8–15 minutes (depending on the greens used, spinach and cabbage cooking the fastest), stirring often.
Add a bit of water if sauce becomes too thick.
Serve hot on *bâtons de manioc*.

GUINEA BISSAU

Guinea Bissau is a former Portuguese colony situated in western Africa. A tropical climate and mostly lowland plains enable rice and other tropical crops to be grown.

There are a number of ethnic groups in the country. About half the population comprises Muslims (thus eschewing pork). Guinea Bissau food combines Portuguese elements with those of its neighbors.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: yam, cassava, taro, plantain, rice (preferred), peanuts.
- Vegetables, including greens, eggplants, peppers (sweet and hot varieties), beans, and okra.
- More common sources of protein are freshwater and sea fish and other marine life. Dried salted fish are an important flavoring ingredient for most cooked dishes.
- Dairy products such as curds and whey are eaten in some regions.
- Meat such as goat, mutton, beef are available, but tough. Chicken is also consumed. Virtually all meat is eaten by non-Muslims.
- Fruits include cashew fruit, avocado, coconut, bananas, and other tropical fruits.
- Seasonings: ground peanuts, chili pepper, guinea pepper, dried fish.

Typical Dishes

- Stews are eaten as side dishes along with rice or mashed root vegetables (such as cassava, taro, or yam). They may consist of vegetables alone, or may be prepared with meat, fish, or chicken.
- Fried and cooked cassava (in the form of chips or cakes) are eaten as snacks.
- *Escabeche* (pickled fish) is common along the coast.

Styles of Eating

- People try to eat three meals a day.
- Families eat together sitting on a mat around a bowl of the staple and some side dishes, which are shared.
- Breakfast usually consists of a porridge, or fried bread, or leftovers from the evening meal. The midday meal depends on the individual's occupation and

resources. The evening meal is composed of a staple and one or more stews of vegetables and meat.
- Eating out is common. Cafes and restaurants usually serve European style. Portuguese pastries are often served in cafes along with coffee and local drinks.

Peas and Meat

This hearty soup, almost a meal in itself, is eaten with rice or mashed yam, taro, plantain, or cassava for a main meal.

1 pound mutton, beef, or turkey, cut into small cubes
1 cup bacon, diced
1 onion, chopped fine
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 large potato, peeled and diced
2 carrots, peeled and diced
1 bay leaf
salt and pepper to taste
6 cups (or more) water
½ pound dried pigeon peas (or substitute black-eyed or split peas), soaked overnight and drained
¼ cup rice

Bring meat, bacon, onion, celery, potato, carrots, bay leaf, and 4 cups water to boil in a covered saucepan.
Lower the heat and simmer slowly for 1 hour, stirring frequently.
Add the peas and rice together with 2 cups water.
Season to taste.
Cover and simmer on lowest heat for 20–30 minutes, or until peas are tender.
If the soup becomes too thick, add more water; however, the soup should be almost as thick as a porridge.

COCONUT CREAM AND COCONUT MILK

Coconut cream and coconut milk (the terms are interchangeable and both may refer to the same product, depending on the labeling) are important thickeners and flavor ingredients in many cuisines around the world. The coconut produces two different kinds of liquid, which are used for different purposes:

Coconut Water or Juice

This is a semi-sweet clear liquid found in the cavity of a young coconut. The water from older coconuts is not usually drunk, as there may not be enough of it (because it is used up by a cottony ball, called a "coconut apple," that develops in the coconut cavity and is relished by children), or it may be rancid-tasting. The water or juice of young coconuts is served as a refreshing drink, along with the jelly-like pulp, often served in slices or shaved with a special tool into noodle-like shreds. It may be further sweetened with sugarcane juice or sharpened with lime juice. It is never the "coconut milk" called for in recipes, and is rarely used in cooking. Coconut water may also be used to clean wounds when sterile water is not available.

(*continued*)

Coconut Cream and Coconut Milk

Coconut cream or coconut milk can be bought in liquid form in cans or in solid form in butter-shaped packs from most Asian stores. Labeling is inconsistent, and the same product is called either "cream" or "milk," depending on brand. The coconut content ranges from about 60 percent (usual) to lower. Choose the product with the highest coconut content. They come in sweetened and nonsweetened versions; use the nonsweetened product for a savory dish.

To make authentic coconut cream or milk at home, you need one or more fresh mature whole coconuts depending on the amount called for in a recipe. Mature coconuts are sold already husked, i.e., in their hard, brown shells, whereas young coconuts are sold with their thick insulating cover of husk intact (make sure the coconut is not moldy by checking the three "eyes" at one end and sniffing). You will also need a coconut grater, 3 large bowls, and a clean cheesecloth or kitchen towel.

Coconut graters come in several versions. One is a sturdy iron shaft about 6–8 inches long with a round serrated scraper at one end. The opposite end is fitted or nailed to a neck extending from a very low stool. The user sits astride or sidesaddle on the stool, takes a half coconut shell in both hands, and repeatedly presses the coconut flesh against the serrated metal scraper, until the flesh is completely scraped (i.e., grated), and all that remains is the brown shell. Another is a table-top grater that clamps on to the edge of a table or working surface, and is operated by turning a handle. Other types may be available at your neighborhood Asian store (some stores that serve a larger Asian population have an on-the-spot grating service for a small fee: ask).

Split a mature coconut in half along the equator. (Normally a very heavy knife or machete is used to accomplish this: the shell is repeatedly tapped all along the equator until it cracks. This is not to be done without proper assistance and guidance.)

Grate the flesh into a large bowl. (If you prefer a more refined product, stop grating just short of the brown inner coating of the shell; otherwise continue grating through to the hard outer shell.)

Add 1 cup hot, not boiling, water to the grated coconut. Let steep for at least 15 minutes.

Transfer coconut and water to another bowl lined with a clean cheesecloth or kitchen towel.

Squeeze the grated coconut by rolling up the towel lengthwise.

Twist each end in opposite directions, forcing the rich coconut liquid into another clean bowl.

This first pressing is very thick, and rather akin to cream in that it is added to a dish at the final stage of cooking or just before serving.

Repeat procedure once or twice more. This second or third pressing produces a liquid closer to the consistency of full-fat or skim milk, and can be simmered until most of the water has evaporated, leaving a thicker consistency, closer to cream.

A less labor-intensive alternative, one which we ourselves use and heartily recommend when the canned or packaged product is unavailable, is to take readily available dry, grated coconut and place into a bowl. The quantity of grated coconut should match the amount (number of cups) of cream called for in a recipe.

Add the same quantity of hot water (preferably cow's milk, for a richer product), and let steep, covered, for at least 15 minutes.

Transfer mixture to a blender and puree.

Pass through a fine sieve or cheesecloth and it is ready for use.

Avocados with Tuna (Abacate com Tuna)

Avocados, of American origin, grow in much of Africa. The most common avocados are very large: at least 1 pound in weight. As in much of Africa, evaporated milk is valued for its flavor and consistency, not simply as a substitute for fresh milk.

2 large, ripe, hard-shelled avocados
1 12-ounce can tuna, drained
2 cups freshly grated coconut (or desiccated coconut revived with hot water, see box "Coconut Cream and Coconut Milk")
¾ cup evaporated milk
3 TBS fresh tomato, skinned and chopped fine
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 lemons, quartered

Cut avocados in half lengthwise and discard the pit. Keep the shells.
Carefully remove the pulp, cube, and place in a bowl.
Add tuna, coconut (reserving one-half cup), evaporated milk, and tomatoes.
Season, mix carefully so as not to mash avocados, and chill.
Stuff avocado shells, sprinkle with remaining coconut, and serve with lemon quarters.

Pickled Fish (Peixe Escabeche)

In Guinea Bissau, fish are collected from the many estuaries and swamps, as well as from the flooded rice fields. The dish can also be made traditionally with frogs' legs.

4 fresh white fish fillets, about 6 ounces each
juice of 1 lemon
1 tsp salt
2 TBS butter
2 TBS oil

For Sauce

2 TBS butter
2 onions, thinly sliced
juice of 1 lemon

Marinate the fish in lemon juice and salt for 20 minutes.
Heat butter and oil together, and fry the fish until golden on both sides. Keep warm.
Prepare the sauce: melt butter in a saucepan.
Stir in onions and sauté until softened.
Add lemon juice.

(*continued*)

Take sauce off the heat and pour over fish.
Serve with manioc fries and a green salad.

Chicken Hot Pot (Chabéu de Galinha)

This is a Guinean adaptation of a common Portuguese dish served at the main meal.

2 pounds chicken pieces
½ tsp salt
chili pepper to taste
1 onion, thinly sliced
¼ cup red palm oil
½ pound okra, stem ends removed, cut in half
¼ pound *tomatillos*, dehusked and sliced (or green tomatoes, sliced)
juice of 1 lemon
water to cover

Season chicken with salt, chili pepper, and onions and marinate for 30 minutes.
Place chicken in large skillet. Add water to barely cover. Simmer till chicken is done, about 20 minutes.
Add palm oil, okra, and *tomatillos*. Simmer for 10 minutes.
Remove from heat, and add lemon juice.
Serve with rice or cassava.

Manioc Fries (Mandioca Frita)

This is a common snack sold in street stalls in many towns.

2 pounds manioc (also known as cassava, yucca, or yuca), peeled and cut into 3-inch lengths
1 tsp salt
water to cover
vegetable oil for frying

Place manioc in a pot with water to cover. Season.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10–15 minutes, or until tender but still firm.
Drain and cool.
Cut each manioc piece into 8 wedges, removing and discarding the center woody core.
Heat 1 inch of oil in a heavy skillet.
Deep-fry manioc chips to a light golden color.
Serve as a snack.

GUYANA

Guyana is just above the Equator on the northeast end of South America. Its tropical coastal plain and savanna favor the production of sugar, rice, and other tropical crops. Livestock, such as cows, pigs, and poultry are raised. Guyana's North Atlantic coast provides fish and shrimp.

Guyana was not colonized by Spain or Portugal, but rather by France, Holland, and Britain, becoming independent in 1966. Guyanese cuisine thus reflects this historical mix and the traditions of its varied ethnic groups: mostly East Indian and African (who were brought to work the plantations), Creole, Amerindian, Chinese, English, Portuguese, and North American. The original dishes are adapted to local taste with available ingredients.

Foodstuffs

- Rice, cassava, yam, and potatoes are staples.
- Poultry and the plentiful crab, shrimp, and fish are popular. Traditionally, Hindus do not eat beef and Muslims do not eat pork. Wild meat, such as iguana lizard or *watrash* (a kind of rodent), are often eaten in the interior regions, especially in pepper pot.
- Tropical vegetables and fruits such as sweet potatoes, okra, eggplants, mangoes, papayas, citrus fruits are much used, as is coconut.

Typical Dishes

- Guyana is the home of the pepper pot, an Amerindian original and the national dish, traditionally served at Christmas. It consists of mixed meats, peppers, and herbs stewed in bitter cassava juice and mixed spices (*cassareep*).
- *Cassareep*—thick and dark boiled-down cassava juice, seasoned with cinnamon, cloves, and other spices—is what gives pepper pot its distinctive flavor, rather than the pepper itself. It also served as a meat preservative in the days before refrigeration. The traditional pepper pot was kept going all year round, various meats being added to the pot with more *cassareep*.
- Fish, chicken, and seafood curries eaten with flat bread (*roti*), and other East Indian dishes.
- *Rijstaffel* (lit. rice table), several small Indonesian dishes with rice, a Dutch legacy.

SCOTCH BONNET CHILI

- Garlic pork, a Portuguese dish, usually prepared during the Christmas season. With eggs and toast, this constitutes a special breakfast treat in some households.

Styles of Eating

- Guyanese prepare three full meals every day.
- Breakfast usually consists of homemade bread with eggs, cheese, butter, and tea or coffee.
- Lunch is usually rice and beans, eaten with vegetables, fish, chicken, or meat.
- The evening meal is similar to lunch, though more substantial, with rice, *roti*, or root vegetables such as cassavas and yams. Other vegetables, meat, or seafood are also eaten.
- Snacks include coconut bread—a sweet loaf with coconut and raisins; toasted cassava bread eaten spread with butter; cassava pone—baked sweet cassava and coconut milk; assorted savory vegetable and spice fritters (from East Indian cuisine). Spiced chickpeas are eaten like peanuts.
- Sweets include black cake—a rich dark fruit cake made of mixed dried fruits, of Scottish origin; Chinese bean cakes—sweetened mashed black or red beans baked in pastry; coconut and rice pudding—sweet rice cooked in coconut milk flavored with cinnamon or other spices.
- Beverages include fresh cow's milk, which may be part of the morning or evening meal; *mauby* juice, made from the bark of a Caribbean tree; *sorrel* juice, from the flowers of red or Jamaican sorrel, a relative of the hibiscus (see Mali for box "African Teas"); ginger beer or ginger cordial, brewed from fresh ginger root, citrus juices, and sugar. Juices of guava, mango, and other tropical fruits are very popular. Rum is used in fruit punches and cocktails.

Cream of Avocado Soup

This soup is served as an appetizer for lunch or dinner.

3 avocados, cubed
3 cups water
1 chicken bouillon cube
2 cups milk
salt, pepper to taste
1 red bell pepper, chopped

Puree avocados with water and stock cube in a food processor.
Strain avocado mixture over a sauce pan, and slowly bring to a boil over gentle heat.
Stir in milk. Check seasoning, adding salt and pepper if needed.
Remove from heat. Garnish with bell peppers.

Tropical Seafood Salad

Salads accompany most major meals.

juice of 4 limes
2 TBS olive oil
1 TBS mayonnaise
salt, pepper to taste
1 tsp prepared mustard
1 cup cooked shrimp or fresh crabmeat, flaked or 8 crab sticks (imitation crab legs), sliced
1 avocado, cubed and drizzled with lime or lemon juice to stop browning
1 red grapefruit, cut into segments
lettuce leaves for serving

Mix well the lime juice, oil, mayonnaise, and seasonings.
Stir in gently seafood and avocado. Chill covered for 30 minutes or more before serving.
Serve on lettuce, garnished with grapefruit slices.

Cook-up Rice

This substantial dish is served for the evening meal.

4 chicken quarters or legs
salt, pepper to taste
2 TBS soy sauce
3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 cup uncooked rice, washed and drained
2 cups blackeyed peas, soaked overnight
2 cups of water
1 can coconut milk
1 chicken stock cube
5 sprigs fresh thyme
6 okra, lightly trimmed, kept whole
2 green onions, chopped

Season chicken with salt, pepper, and soy sauce.
Heat oil over medium heat in a stewing pot; brown chicken all over, for about 10 minutes.
Take out the chicken and set aside.
Add onion and garlic to pot; stir-fry until softened.
Stir in rice. Add chicken and soaked peas.
Stir in water, coconut milk, stock cube, and thyme, mixing well.
Cover pot and when it comes to a boil, reduce heat to lowest setting and simmer for about 15–20 minutes, until all liquid is absorbed. Turn off heat. Add okra.
Just before serving, garnish with green onions.
Serve with *callaloo* fritters and mango pepper sauce (recipe follows the Garlic Pork recipe).

Garlic Pork

Garlic pork is often a main meat dish for the evening.

3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 TBS crumbled dried thyme
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped (or kept whole for less heat)
2 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
1½ cups vinegar
2 pounds boneless pork shoulder, thickly sliced

In a large covered container, mix the garlic, thyme, pepper, salt, and sugar with 1 cup of the vinegar.
Rinse each slice of pork in the remaining vinegar and discard vinegar.
Marinate pork in the garlic mixture for two days in the refrigerator, turning them so that all pieces are evenly flavored.
Drain pork slices.
Place in a single layer in a baking dish and bake for 35–40 minutes in a medium hot 350°F oven.
Serve with rice.

Callaloo *Fritters*

Callaloo in Guyana refers to the leaves of the taro plant (in other countries, callaloo is the name given to another type of green). You may substitute spinach.

2 TBS vegetable oil
½ onion, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
2 cups taro leaves (or fresh, or frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry), finely chopped
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup self-rising flour
1 egg, beaten
vegetable oil for deep-frying

Heat 2 TBS oil and stir-fry onion until soft.
Add tomato, stir-fry 5 minutes.
Add greens, salt, and pepper, and cook for 5–10 minutes. Set aside to cool.
Mix flour and egg into well-drained greens.
Heat ½ inch oil over medium heat in a deep-frying pan.
Drop tablespoonfuls of the spinach mixture into the hot oil.
Turn over to brown evenly. Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot for a snack.

Coconut Ice Cream

Coconuts are common throughout the Caribbean, and this ice cream is a popular dessert or snack.

1 8-ounce can evaporated milk
1 8-ounce can condensed milk
¼ cup cornstarch or custard powder
¼ cup water
1½ cups thick coconut milk

Heat the evaporated and condensed milk in a pan over medium heat.
Mix cornstarch to a paste with water. Add to the milk and keep stirring continuously until it thickens.
Add coconut milk, and turn off heat. Let mixture cool.
Chill 1 hour or overnight.
Put into ice-cream maker and churn according to instructions.
If an ice-cream maker is not available, freeze the mixture for 2 hours or until the edges start to freeze. Beat thoroughly with a mixer for 5 minutes and return to the freezer for 2 hours.
Beat once more and freeze until solid for 3 hours or overnight.

Mango Pepper Sauce

This is a relish that can accompany any savory dish.

1 unripe mango, peeled and chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 red chili (preferably *wiri-wiri*, or Scotch bonnet), minced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tsp salt
juice of 1 large lemon

Mix all ingredients together.
Chill, covered, at least 30 minutes before using.

HAITI

Haiti, a former French colony, was the second nation to become independent in the Americas (the first being the United States) in 1803. It shares the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. Though mainly rough and mountainous, its climate favors cultivation of coffee and other tropical crops. However, deforestation and poor soil management have led to poor harvests, and as a consequence, much food is imported from the United States or the Dominican Republic.

Haitian cooking incorporates the original foods of the African slaves brought by French colonialists with elements from French and other Caribbean cooking, using local spices, herbs, and other foodstuffs.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, corn, beans, cassava.
- Meat: chicken, pork, guinea fowl, beef, turkey, lamb, goat, fish, and seafood (particularly conch, or *lambi*), eggs.
- Vegetables: pumpkin, squash, potato, okra, sweet potato, cabbage, sweet and hot peppers, black mushrooms (*djon djon*), eggplant, peanuts, cashews.
- Fruits: pineapple, mango, orange, grapefruit, lemon, lime.
- Seasonings: ground spices (a mix of garlic, bell peppers, onions, coriander, and parsley prepared by each family); hot pepper sauce called *ti malice*.

Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes: with beans, called *riz et pois*, is eaten daily; with black mushrooms (*djon djon*, unique to Haiti). Served with chicken or pork and fried plantain (*banane pesée*), the meal resembles neighboring Dominican Republic's national dish *bandera* ("the flag").
- Cornmeal with beans (*maïs moulu*).
- Poultry or meat is often marinated in sour orange, a local fruit, whose juice tastes like a mix of orange and lemon, with herbs and spices, then stewed or fried. *Tassot* is marinated and fried goat or turkey; *grillot* is marinated and fried pork.
- Sweets: mango pie, fresh coconut ice cream, cashew nuts, tropical fruits.

Styles of Eating

- Most people try to eat three meals a day.
- Breakfast: cornmeal pudding; boiled, fried, or mashed plantain; cassava bread; coffee.
- Lunch: rice and beans, stew.
- Dinner: rice and beans or cornmeal pudding; chicken or other meat; sweet potato pudding.
- Snacks, eaten at any time: bean fritters (*accras*), conch or lobster fritters, roast corn on the cob.

Plantain Puree (Bouillie de Banane et Plantain)

Plantain puree is often served for breakfast or the evening meal.

1 green plantain, peeled, cut into ½-inch slices
1 ripe banana
1 cup water
1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
1 14-ounce can coconut milk (reserve ⅓ cup for serving)
¼ tsp vanilla extract
1 star anise
½ cup white or brown sugar
1 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp nutmeg
peel of 1 lime or lemon, grated

In a blender or food processor, puree the plantain, banana, and 1 cup water.
Pour puree into a saucepan, stir in evaporated milk and coconut milk, vanilla, star anise, and sugar.
Gently bring mixture to a boil over low heat.
Let cook for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring often so that mixture does not stick.
When thick as oatmeal, turn off heat.
To serve: sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg, and lime rind; pour a bit of coconut milk, as desired.

Pumpkin Soup (Soup Joumou *or* Soupe Giraumon)

This is a dish created in 1804 and represents Haitian defiance of the French colonial government, who had forbidden slaves to eat pumpkin. It is customarily eaten on New Year's Day to bring luck; the following day celebrates Haitian independence. Eat as a first course for a heavy meal, or as a main course with bread or boiled plantains for a light meal.

1 pound corned beef (not canned) or beef stewing meat, cubed
5 cups water
1½ pounds pumpkin, peeled, diced
2 turnips, diced

(*continued*)

2 stalks celery, chopped
1 onion, chopped
3 sprigs parsley
3 sprigs thyme
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup milk
⅛ tsp nutmeg
1 TBS butter
¾ cup raw rice, washed, or small pasta shapes
salt and pepper
2–4 tsp butter

In a saucepan, cover beef with water and simmer covered over low heat for 30–40 minutes, or until tender.
Add pumpkin, turnips, celery, onion, parsley, thyme, and 2 cloves garlic.
Simmer until pumpkin is tender (15–20 minutes).
Discard parsley and thyme.
In food processor, puree vegetables with ¼ cup cooking liquid.
Return to saucepan and heat through.
Add milk, nutmeg, butter, and rice; cook until rice is tender (15–20 minutes).
Season with salt and pepper, and mix in remaining garlic.
Serve hot with a little butter in each bowl.

Meat and Eggplant Skewers

This is usually made with goat, one of Haiti's most commonly available meats. Pork or lamb or chicken can be substituted. Serve this for a midday or evening meal with rice and peas or mashed plantain.

1 pound boneless pork or lamb, cut into 1-inch cubes
6 onions, peeled and quartered
1 eggplant, cut into 24 cubes
2 TBS chopped fresh thyme
2 TBS chopped fresh parsley
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Scotch bonnet pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
1½ cups sour orange juice or a mixture of orange and lemon juices
¼ cup olive oil
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground pepper

Soak 8 bamboo skewers in water for at least 30 minutes. On each skewer, place alternately three pieces of meat, three pieces of onion, and three pieces of eggplant.
In a rectangular, covered container, at least 8 inches long, combine the thyme, parsley, garlic, Scotch bonnet pepper (if using), citrus juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper.
Add the skewered meat, and refrigerate overnight, turning the skewers several times to marinate evenly.
Grill skewers over medium heat for 4 or 5 minutes, or until done.

Fried Plantains (Bananes Pesées)

Twice-fried and pressed plantains are served throughout the Caribbean, but each island prepares and flavors it differently. This Haitian version presoaks the plantains in brine before cooking. Serve as a snack, or as a side dish for a midday or evening meal with meat or with rice and peas.

1 tsp salt
4 cups water
4 green plantains, sliced into ¾-inch discs
vegetable oil

Make a brine with the salt and water, and soak the plantains in it for one hour.
Drain and dry thoroughly with paper towels (this step is important so that the plantains do not splatter oil during frying).
In a deep skillet, pour enough oil to come up to ½ inch up the sides of the pan.
Heat the oil at medium heat.
Fry the plantains until lightly colored, a few at a time, so as not to lower the oil temperature.
Take out the fried plantains, and flatten them by pounding or pressing on them with a steak mallet or wooden spoon until half as thick.
Refry until golden brown and crusty.

Fruit Cocktail Jelly (Blanc Manger)

Fruit cocktail jelly is a very popular dessert throughout Haiti.

3 packets powdered gelatin
2 12-ounce cans evaporated milk
1 12-ounce can coconut milk
1 12-ounce can fruit cocktail
1 tsp vanilla
½ tsp cinnamon
rind of one lime, grated
sugar to taste

Dissolve the gelatin in ¾ cup warm water.
In a saucepan, heat the evaporated milk and coconut milk slowly.
Stir in the gelatin until completely dissolved. Turn off heat when bubbles appear on sides of pan.
Drain fruit cocktail; add to milk mixture.
Stir in vanilla, cinnamon, and lime. Mix well and add sugar to taste, as desired.
Pour fruit mixture into a bowl or 1½-quart mold.
Refrigerate for 24 hours.
To serve, unmold onto a serving dish or scoop into individual bowls.

HONDURAS

Honduras is the second largest country in Central America. Formerly a Spanish colony, it gained independence in 1821. It is mostly mountainous, with a subtropical lowland and temperate mountain climate, ideal for coffee, one of its major exports, and other tropical fruits. Its Caribbean and Pacific coasts provide shrimp and lobster for export.

Hondurans are mostly of European or mixed Spanish-Amerindian descent, with a minority being descendants of Mayans and mixed Afro-Caribbeans called Garifuna. This mixed heritage accounts for the various influences in Honduran cooking: Spanish, Caribbean, and African.

Foodstuffs

- Staples include corn, beans, rice, plantains, and cassava.
- Fruits and vegetables: pumpkin, sweet and hot peppers, *chayote* (christophene), cabbage, sweet potatoes, pineapple, eggplant. Most people grow their own vegetables.
- Pork, chicken, game (turtle), and more rarely, beef.
- Milk products including white cheese and sour cream, and eggs.
- Seasonings: two types of cilantro are in use. Cumin, achiote (natural red food dye and flavoring), and oregano are used to flavor many dishes.

Typical Dishes

- Steamed savory dumplings: corn and meat (*tamales, montucas*); rice, meat and vegetables (*nacatamales*).
- Rice dishes: with beans, with chicken, with milk.
- Stews with meat and vegetables (*guizado*), or with added coconut milk (*tapado*). Coconut milk is frequently added to stews and soups.
- Charcoal-grilled steaks (*churrasco*) or skewered meats (*pinchos*) eaten with plantain or potato chips, salad, pickled vegetables (*encurtido*).
- Conch soup (*sopa de caracol*) with coconut milk and vegetables.
- Sweets and cakes of coconut and bananas.
- Snacks: fried plantain chips (*tajaditas*); cheese, bean, and cream cheese filled tortillas (*baleadas*); sliced green mangoes sprinkled with salt and cumin; Honduran fondue (*anafre*): refried beans or soft cheese served in a clay pot atop a

clay burner with glowing coals. Soft fluffy tortillas are dipped into the hot beans or melted cheese.

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: fried beans, eggs, cheese, sour cream, fried bananas, coffee.
- Lunch: soup, salad, rice, tortillas, meat, cheese, followed by a sweet.
- Supper: lighter meal than lunch, with similar foods as breakfast or lunch leftovers.
- Honduran drinks include coffee, which is drunk by adults and even children with every meal and between meals. Drinks (*horchata*) made of milk, rice or other cereal, nuts or seeds; milk and fruit blends (*licuado*); fruit and water blends (*fresco*). *Chicha* is a home-brew made from pineapple peel. Beer, rum, and other spirits (*aguardiente*) are locally brewed.

Banana Porridge (Letu)

This is a Garifuna specialty, often eaten for breakfast or as a snack. The Garifuna community trace their descent to escaped black slaves intermarrying with Amerindians. This recipe and others that use bananas in imaginative ways are typical of traditional Garifuna cooking with roots that go back to Africa.

4 ripe bananas
3 cups coconut milk
½ tsp nutmeg or cinnamon
brown or white sugar to taste

Grill bananas (or boil in their skin, with enough water to cover) for about 7–10 minutes.
Peel the bananas and lightly mash the flesh.
In a saucepan, put the mashed bananas and stir in 2½ cups coconut milk. (Reserve ½ cup coconut milk.)
Heat gently and cook until the mixture thickens like oatmeal, stirring often so that it does not stick to the bottom of the pan.
Remove from heat.
Serve in individual bowls, sprinkled with nutmeg or cinnamon. Pour a bit of coconut milk. Add sugar if desired.

Milk and Cinnamon Rice (Arroz con Leche)

This rice dish is often served at Christmas. It can be eaten hot or cold. Serve it with stewed chicken (see next recipe) and fried plantains.

4 cups milk
2 cinnamon sticks or 1 TBS powdered cinnamon
2 cups rice, washed and drained
½ tsp salt (optional)

(*continued*)

In a heavy, covered saucepan, gently warm the milk and cinnamon, over low heat, for 10–15 minutes to infuse the milk with the spice.
Stir in the rice and salt, if using, and continue cooking for 45 minutes on low, until rice is cooked and all the milk is absorbed.

Chicken Stewed in Coconut Milk
(Tapado de Pollo)

This dish is similar to stewed chicken dishes served all over Central America. However, the coconut milk, various spices, and orange coloring from the achiote make this typically Honduran. Achiote paste is available in Hispanic food stores or in the Hispanic food section in major supermarkets. If you cannot find it, use paprika instead. Serve this with plain or cinnamon-flavored rice or soft flour tortillas for lunch or dinner, with fried plantains and a salad of tomatoes, bell peppers, and cucumbers.

4 chicken quarters, legs or other portions
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp cumin
2 TBS cooking oil
2 TBS sugar
3–4 cloves garlic, minced
1 chili pepper, seeded, chopped (optional)
1 onion, chopped
1 TBS achiote paste or paprika
½–1 cup water or stock
2 red bell peppers, diced
2 green bell peppers, diced
2 cups coconut milk

Season the chicken with salt, pepper, and cumin, rubbing the spices in well. Let rest for about 30 minutes.
In a thick-bottomed, large saucepan over low to medium heat, heat the oil and sugar until caramelized (turned into a very dark syrup).
Add chicken to saucepan, turning the pieces all over to get evenly colored.
Add garlic, chili, onion, achiote or paprika and stir.
Add ½ cup water, cover the pan, and turn down the heat to let the chicken gently simmer for about 15 minutes. If the water is absorbed before this time, add the rest of the water so that the chicken does not stick to the pan.
Add bell peppers and coconut milk, stirring well.
Continue to simmer until the sauce is thick, checking and stirring occasionally to see that the bottom is not burning.
Serve hot.

Plantain Turnovers (Tortas de Plátano)

This is a simple but popular snack combining two most commonly eaten items. Eat with sour cream or salty, firm, white cheese (*quesillo*).

3 ripe plantains or bananas
3 TBS flour
4 TBS butter
⅔ cup cooking oil
⅔ cup cooked kidney beans

In a saucepan, cook the plantains in their skins in enough boiling water to cover for 10–14 minutes or until soft. Peel and set aside. If using bananas, there is no need to cook them first.
In a food processor, process the plantains or bananas with flour and butter to a smooth paste. Set aside.
In a skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of oil and when hot, fry the beans for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.
Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in the same skillet, and fry spoonfuls of the plantain or banana paste, spreading it around with a fork to form a small pancake.
While the pancake is cooking, place a teaspoonful of fried beans in the middle and fold up the pancake to form a crescent, covering the bean filling.
Fry both sides of the turnover for around 3 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Continue with remaining ingredients.

Date and Nut Cake (Queque de Datiles con Nueces)

This is a popular and well-loved cake, particularly made during Christmas. Cashews are more readily available in Honduras but any other nut will be just as tasty. Serve this for dessert or with coffee as a snack.

2 cups flour
1¾ tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt
1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
2 tsp vanilla
4 eggs
2 cups chopped, pitted dates
2 cups finely chopped nuts (cashews, pecans, or walnuts)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9 × 12 × 2-inch pan with waxed paper; grease paper and sides of the pan.
In a bowl, blend flour, baking powder and soda, and salt. Set aside.
In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light. Stir in the vanilla.
Add eggs, one at a time; cream well after each addition.
Add flour mixture in 3 or 4 portions; beat until smooth after each.

(*continued*)

Mix in the dates and nuts.
Pour the batter into prepared pan.
Bake for 35–45 minutes or until cake tests done.
Let the cake cool in the pan. When completely cold, cut into squares and dust with confectioners' sugar.

HUNGARY

Hungary is a landlocked country in central Europe, settled by nomadic Magyars. It came under Turkish rule, then became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Flat and fertile with a temperate climate, rich crops of wheat, fruit (cherries and grapes in particular), and peppers of the paprika variety, Hungary's foremost spice, are grown.

Hungarian cuisine has been influenced by Turkish, central and western European, and Austrian cuisines.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potatoes, assorted breads and rolls, wheat noodles, paprika.
- Favorite meats are beef, veal, mutton, and pork. Chicken and goose (especially liver).
- Freshwater fish such as carp and pike perch are in great demand.
- Cabbage, green bell pepper, celeriac, parsnip, marrow, cucumber, cauliflower, tomato, carrot, assorted mushrooms, asparagus, peas, green beans, and other legumes.
- Hungarian farmers raise cherries (Morello and sweet), plums, grapes (that go into quality Hungarian wine), apricots, quinces, pears, strawberries, and other berries such as red currants and raspberries.
- Pickles of cucumber with or without dill, green bell pepper, vegetable marrow (overgrown zucchini), mushroom, or mixed vegetables; sweet preserves and jams of Morello cherry, apples, apricot, plum, quince, rose hip, green walnut, strawberry, red currant, and other berries.
- Seasonings include hot and sweet paprika, caraway, onion, tomato, garlic, dill, sour cream, bay leaf, parsley, marjoram, thyme. A common sauce called *lecsó* is made of stewed tomato, onion, green bell pepper, paprika, and bacon. Lard or goose fat are used for cooking, giving the characteristic taste.

Typical Dishes

- *Gulyasleves* (goulash soup), a thick soup with meat and hot paprika is the most typical Hungarian dish.
- Stews (*pörkölt*) of meat, seasoned liberally with paprika.
- *Paprikash*: thick spicy meat or vegetable dishes with sour cream.

- Pasta dishes.
- Turkish-influenced dishes: cabbage stuffed with meat; thin layered pastry filled with fruit and nuts (*rétes*, Hungarian strudel).
- Dumplings, either to accompany a meat dish, or in soup, are eaten in various forms.
- Pancakes and other wheat dishes are highly esteemed, as are cakes, which are often made in layers.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are commonly eaten. Snacks, particularly coffee and cake, are eaten at midmorning or late afternoon.
- Table settings are European standard, and, due to the influence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, often formal.
- Breakfast may be pancakes, or fresh bread or rolls, eaten with cheese, or preserved meats, such as bacon, ham, or sausage. Milk (hot or cold), hot chocolate, coffee or tea to drink.
- Lunch and dinner tend to be substantial, usually composed of at least three dishes: an appetizer of salad or soup, a main dish of meat and vegetables, and a dessert.
- Many Hungarian meals start with a hot (and spicy) soup such as the famous *gulyas*. This is often followed by pasta with cottage cheese and sour cream. A heavy meat dish follows, usually accompanied by cooked vegetables. Stewed or baked fruit eaten with cream end the meal.
- Wine is drunk with most meals, and the Hungarians have adopted the Austrian habit of drinking coffee for snacks and during breaks.

Peasant's Salad from Bugac
(Bugaci Paraszt-saláta)

This salad often serves as an appetizer in main meals.

4 green bell peppers, cut into thin strips
2 tomatoes, quartered and thinly sliced
1 small cucumber, sliced into thin disks
1 onion, thinly sliced into rings
2 TBS salad oil
3 TBS white wine vinegar
salt to taste
6 ounces salted hard white cheese (*feta* or *kaskaval*), grated
1 cup chopped parsley

Mix vegetables in a bowl. Season.
Whisk salad oil, vinegar, salt, and cheese. Pour over the vegetables
Cover and refrigerate for 1–2 hours.
Garnish with chopped parsley.
Serve as a first course.

Chilled Sour Cherry Soup (Hideg Meggyleves)

As in many central European countries, cold fruit soup is a summer appetizer. Cherries, widely grown, are popularly used.

2½ pints water
6 ounces sugar
pinch of salt
grated peel of half a lemon
¼ tsp cinnamon powder
1 pound sour (Morello) cherries, pitted
1 TBS flour
¼ cup sour cream

Boil water, sugar, salt, lemon peel, and cinnamon for 5 minutes in a large enamel or steel pot.
Add cherries to the boiling water and simmer 4–5 minutes.
Blend flour and cream into a slurry with a ladle of the hot cherry soup. Add slurry to soup and boil until it thickens.
Leave to cool, and serve chilled.

Highwaymen's Dumpling Soup (Mecseki Betyárgombócleves)

Hungarian cowboys (*csikós*) are among the most skilled in the world, and unsurprisingly, cowboys and highwaymen are popular folklore figures. The dumplings may be an echo of central Asian *manti*, akin to Chinese *mantou*. Dumpling soup is served for lunch or dinner in the colder season.

3 TBS lard or oil
2 cups chopped onions
1 carrot, chopped
1 cup Hamburg parsley (parsley root, or substitute leaf parsley), finely chopped
1 cup celeriac, chopped (or substitute celery)
1 TBS flour
1 tsp fresh thyme
1 quart stock made of 1 quart hot water and 2 cubes bouillon
salt and pepper to taste
8 dumplings
¼ cup sour cream
1 egg yolk, beaten

Heat lard over medium heat in a heavy saucepan. Sauté onions until golden. Reserve half a cup for stuffing the dumplings.
Stir in carrot, parsley, and celeriac, and cook until softened.
Sprinkle with flour; add thyme and stock.
Season to taste, and simmer for 1 hour.
Meanwhile, prepare dumplings (recipe follows below).
Stir in dumplings.
Just before serving, in a small bowl, blend sour cream and egg yolk; gradually blend in a cup of hot soup. Stir sour cream mixture into soup and turn off heat.

(*continued*)

Dumplings

4 medium potatoes, boiled, peeled, and mashed
2 TBS lard, goose fat, or bacon drippings
2 TBS flour
1 large egg
½ cup browned chopped onion (reserved from soup recipe)
1 cup ground beef, pork, chicken, or turkey
salt and pepper to taste

Prepare dough by mixing in a food processor the mashed potatoes, 1 TBS lard, flour, egg, and salt.
Divide into eight portions, and roll out to ½-inch disks on a lightly floured surface. Cover with a cloth or towel to keep moist while preparing filling.
Melt remaining 1 TBS lard in a frying pan. Add chosen meat and fry until browned, about 5 minutes.
Stir in reserved fried onions. Season and mix thoroughly.
To stuff dumplings: place a TBS of filling in the center of each disk.
Fold over and shape into half-moons, pressing edges to seal with a fork or fingers.
Slip dumplings gently into the simmering soup.
Cook for 20–30 minutes, or until the filling is done.
Serve 2 dumplings per person in a large soup bowl, and ladle soup and vegetables over.

Stuffed Chicken (Töltött Csirke)

Stuffed foods may owe their origin to Turkish or central Asian influences. Stuffed chicken is a main dish. Serve with mashed or sauteed potatoes.

1 whole chicken, about 3 lb.
½ pound mushrooms, chopped
3 strips smoked fatty bacon, fried crisp and crumbled, fat reserved
2 slices dry bread
¼ cup milk
1 egg, beaten
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 cup parsley, minced
1 tsp marjoram
salt to taste
½ tsp white or black pepper
3 TBS lard, chicken fat, or cooking oil

Loosen the area around the chicken's breast and legs by gently pushing your fingers between the chicken skin and flesh at the openings at neck and bottom. Be careful not to tear the skin.
Lightly salt the chicken cavity and under the skin.
Sauté mushrooms in bacon fat. Set aside.
Soak bread in milk, tear up into small pieces, and add to mushrooms, bacon, egg, onion, parsley, salt, and pepper to make the stuffing. Blend well.
Spread some stuffing evenly under the chicken skin in the area around the breast and legs.
Shape the stuffed areas so that the chicken is nicely rounded.

Put the remaining stuffing in the chicken cavity.
Heat lard, chicken fat, or oil until hot in a roasting pan, and carefully (so as not to be splashed by the hot fat) brown chicken all over.
Place chicken, breast side down, on a rack in the pan.
Place in a preheated 350°F oven for about 1 hour, basting frequently with the drippings.
Turn the chicken over when browned, after about 30 minutes.
After an hour, check the chicken. To tell if chicken is done: the leg joint should move freely, and juices run clear (not bloody) when a knife is stuck in.
If chicken is getting too brown before it is done, cover loosely with foil.
If necessary, bake another 8–10 minutes.
Let chicken rest for 15–20 minutes to settle the stuffing before carving.

Tomato and Sweet Pepper Sauce (Lecsó)

Lecsó is the foundation of many Hungarian dishes such as vegetable and meat stews, or on its own. Slices of garlic or other spicy sausage, leftover roast meat, or fried chicken may also be added to make a more substantial dish.

4 strips fatty bacon, diced
1 TBS lard or cooking oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 tsp paprika
1 pound tomatoes, peeled and quartered
2 pounds green bell peppers, seeded, cored, and cut into strips
salt to taste

Fry bacon in lard or oil until golden, then add onion and fry until softened.
Stir in paprika.
Add tomatoes, peppers, and salt.
Simmer, covered, for 10–15 minutes.
Uncover and continue to simmer until tender and thickened.
Serve hot with rice, noodles, or potatoes.

Walnut Bread for Christmas (Diós Kalács)

This rich bread is the centerpiece, along with the roast, of the Christmas dinner, and is the pride of most housewives.

1 ounce yeast
½ cup sour cream
1 pound flour
½ pound butter
pinch of salt
1 ounce sugar
3 egg yolks
walnut filling

(*continued*)

Sprinkle yeast over the sour cream and place in a warm place until dissolved, about 10 minutes.
In a food processor, mix yeast mixture, flour, butter, salt, sugar, and ¾ of the egg yolks just until they form a dough.
Remove from processor, knead on a lightly floured surface until smooth and elastic.
Place in a greased bowl, cover, and leave in a warm place for about 45 minutes or until doubled.
Divide dough into two.
On a floured cheesecloth, roll out one dough ball to a ⅓-inch-thick rectangle.
Spread half of the filling to within an inch of both edges.
Roll up firmly like a jelly roll and place seam side down on a greased and floured baking sheet.
Repeat with the remaining piece of dough.
Brush rolls twice with remaining beaten egg yolk.
Prick with a fork in a pattern of waves or flowers.
Bake in the middle of the oven at 350°F for 30 minutes; turn down heat to 325°F and continue baking until rolls are golden brown, about 10 minutes.
Let cool on a cake rake. To serve, cut crosswise into ½-inch pieces.

Walnut Filling

⅔ pound sugar
½ cup water
12 ounces walnuts, rough ground
12 ounces almonds, rough ground
3 apples, grated
6 ounces seedless raisins
½ tsp vanilla extract
grated peel from 1 lemon
2 TBS apricot jam or diced quince cheese (a sweet paste formed into blocks, available from most central European shops, and from Portuguese and South American shops as *marmelada*)

Bring sugar and water to a boil for 5 minutes to make a light syrup.
Add walnuts and almonds.
Remove from heat, and stir in the remaining ingredients.

ICELAND

Populated by the descendants of Scandinavian seafarers, this island nation was under Norwegian then Danish rule until independence in 1944. The climate is cold, but modified by the Gulf Stream. Landscape is rocky, punctuated by volcanoes, glaciers, and hot springs. The many hot springs are used today to warm the cities and hothouses. Agriculture has always been an uncertain pursuit in Iceland due to the cold and the harsh winters. Farmers raise cold-resistant crops such as rye, barley, and vegetables such as cabbages and turnips. The sea has always been a major source of food (Iceland went to war in the last century to protect its fishing areas).

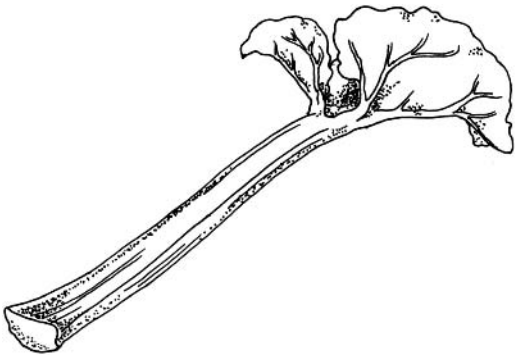
Icelandic traditional foods focused on preserving through salting or fermentation locally available foodstuffs, resulting in certain dishes that are akin to Inuit food (whale blubber, fermented seal). Contemporary technology such as refrigerators and transportation enable a wider range of foods to be eaten, either imported or tasted during travel, and modern foods are prepared using methods, spices, and herbs from other cuisines such as western European, American, Mediterranean, and Asian.

Foodstuffs

- Bread, potatoes, fish (many types, both sea and freshwater) and seafood (many types) are the staples.
- Mutton, horsemeat, and fish are favorite meats.
- Wild foods such as reindeer, goose, ptarmigan, puffin, whale, seal.
- Rhubarb, bilberries (wild blueberries), and other berries.

Typical Dishes

- Salted, smoked, pickled, fermented fish such as salmon, herring, cod, shark, ray.
- Soups of lamb, other meat or fish and vegetables (carrot, potato, leek).
- Fried dishes: fishballs, fishcakes, chicken.
- Rhubarb dishes: porridge, jam, soup.
- Roast lamb for special occasions, such as Christmas.
- Rye bread, flat bread, leaf bread (fried thin bread for Christmas).
- Cakes and sweets: rice pudding, curds (*skyr*) with berries in syrup, mandarin cheesecake, carnival buns (similar to *choux à la crème* or cream puffs).



RHUBARB

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day, more in the winter.
- Breakfast is usually based on porridge or some grain, together with a warm drink.
- Lunch may be light—often little more than sandwich or some soup.
- Dinners tend to be substantial family affairs, based on a meat or fish dish with potatoes, cabbage, or other greens. Starters may be soup or pickled fish, or eggs.
- Sunday dinner is typically roast meat, usually lamb, with caramelized or mashed potatoes, rhubarb jam, and peas or other vegetables. Dessert is usually ice cream.
- Drinks: carbonated drinks, fruit juices, milk, coffee, tea, beer, wine, mead, ale, potato-based caraway-flavored alcohol (*brennivín*), other liquor.

Egg Soup (Eggjamjólk)

Unexpectedly for its name, this is actually a sweet, eaten as a snack on a cold day, or as dessert.

2 eggs
2 TBS brown sugar
2 TBS flour
5 cups milk
2 TBS seedless raisins, soaked in hot water
¼ tsp vanilla extract
sugar for sprinkling

Using a blender or food processor, beat eggs with sugar until frothy.
Add flour and 1 cup milk.
Scald remaining milk. Add raisins (discard the water).
When the milk starts to boil, turn off the heat.
Pour hot milk slowly into the egg and sugar mixture, whisking constantly.
Return mix to saucepan and cook on lowest heat for 10 minutes, stirring constantly.
Stir in vanilla. Sprinkle sugar on top and serve immediately.

Lamb Stew (Kjötsúpa)

Lamb stew is a very traditional Icelandic dish, with many variations. Feel free to vary as you see fit. Serve with rye bread.

1 quart water
1 pound lamb or mutton, cut into bite sizes
½ cup rolled oats or uncooked rice
1 onion, cubed
¼ pound white cabbage, cut in chunks
2 carrots, cubed

½ turnip, cubed
1 fat leek, coarse greens removed, finely sliced
4 potatoes, peeled and diced
salt and pepper to taste

Bring water to a boil. Add meat. Lower heat to medium and cook meat for about 2–3 minutes, skimming off froth. Season. Turn down heat and continue simmering for 30 minutes.
Add oats or rice. Simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in all the vegetables, and simmer for 25–35 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Check the seasoning.
Serve with a small pitcher of milk or cream for each person to add.
Best if made the day before eating, chilled, and the surface fat skimmed off, then reheated.

Lamb Pâté (Lambakæfa)

Premodern Iceland was a poor society, and leftovers were always utilized. This pâté is intended to use up meat scraps, usually mutton.

2 pounds lamb or mutton meat on the bone (neck, shank, or breast) or leftover roast meat
1 cup water
½–¾ pound suet (beef, mutton, or pork lard)
1 onion, quartered
1 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper
½ tsp allspice, ground
½ tsp cloves, ground

Cook the meat in water with suet, onion, and salt until tender.
Take the meat off the bones; discard the bones. Skim the fat from the liquid and reserve both.
In a food processor, process the meat, onion, fat, and spices until just coarsely ground.
Add a bit of cooking liquid if necessary to make the pâté easier to spread.
Store in a covered container in the refrigerator.
Spread on fresh bread for a snack or cut into neat squares and serve as an appetizer.

Icelandic Fish Balls (Fiskibollur)

Fish, particularly cod, provides an alternate form of protein for the Icelanders. These fish balls are usually eaten with melted butter or cocktail sauce.

1 pound fillet of white fish (cod or haddock are traditional, but any white fleshed fillet will do), skinless and boneless
1 medium onion

(*continued*)

5 ounces flour
2 ounces cornstarch or potato flour
½ tsp salt
2 eggs
1–2 TBS milk
1 cup vegetable oil for frying

Grind fish fillet with onion in food processor.
Add all dry ingredients, eggs, and milk to bind if necessary, just enough to make a firm paste.
(Add a bit more cornstarch if necessary.)
Form golf-size balls.
Heat oil in a frying pan to about ½-inch deep.
Fry balls gently until golden brown.
Serve with potatoes.

Caramelized Potatoes (Brúnadthar Kartöflur)

This is frequently served with a meat dish.

2 ounces sugar
2 ounces butter
2 pounds cooked waxy potatoes, skinned and cooled, cut into 2-inch pieces

Melt sugar slowly over low heat in a large skillet or saucepan.
When it starts to caramelize, add butter and mix well.
Add potatoes, stirring or shaking the pan to coat them evenly.
Serve hot.

Wedded Bliss Cake (Hjónabandssæla)

This is a cake that is often served at teatime.

½ pound oatmeal
½ cup whole wheat flour
½ cup flour
½ cup brown sugar, well packed
½ tsp baking soda
½ cup butter, softened
1 egg
½ cup rhubarb jam, or pitted stewed prunes, soaked, pitted, and finely minced

Heat oven to 400°F.
Place the dry ingredients and the butter into a food processor and process until the mixture resembles coarse meal.
Add the egg and process just until the mixture forms a dough.
Press ¾ the dough into a 10-inch pie plate, reserving the rest for topping.
Spread dough with the jam.

Crumble remaining dough over the cake.
Bake for 20 minutes or until the top is nicely browned.

Rhubarb Jam (Rabarbarasulta)

This is a very popular sweet, often served as a relish with roast meats. Choose the reddest stalks of rhubarb you can find: they give the best color. Otherwise you may have to cheat and use beet or food coloring. Use only ½ cup sugar for a tarter result; this will also make for shorter keeping time, so keep refrigerated and use up as soon as possible.

1 pound rhubarb, stalks only, chopped
½–¾ pound sugar
a few drops red food coloring (optional)

In a bowl, mix rhubarb and sugar. Set aside for 5 hours or overnight.
Transfer to a microwaveable container (2½ pints capacity).
Microwave at 800 watts for 5 minutes. Stir.
Repeat microwaving and stirring 3–4 times, or until thickened.
Add food coloring if desired.

INDIA

Over a third the size of the United States, making it the world's seventh largest country by area, India has a very ancient civilization. It is the birthplace of four major religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Arabs, Turks, Greeks, Persians, Mongols, British, French, and Portuguese have all colonized India or parts of it, until independence from British rule in 1947. Both topography and climate vary from wide plains and deserts to high cool mountains. Overall, most of the country is tropical.

Among other foods, India is the source of sugarcane, mangoes, and turmeric. Rice, wheat, pulses, sugar, tea (possibly the world's finest), and coffee are major crops. India's cuisine is complex and rich, influenced by Arab, Persian, and Turkish cuisines, and is based on a sophisticated use of spices.

Widespread vegetarianism has its roots in Hinduism and the belief in nonviolence toward all living things. Food in India—or to be more precise, what may or may not be eaten—is determined by religion (Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Christian), region (north/south, rural/urban), caste, and socio-economic status (see box "Religion and Food Prohibitions").

Foodstuffs

- Staples:
  - North: flat breads, generically called *roti* (pan-baked *chapati* and *phulka*, fried *puri*, baked *naan*) made of various cereals—wheat, corn, barley—or mixed with pulses: chickpeas, lentils.
  - South: boiled rice, lentils.
  - West, center: sorghum, millet.
- Meat:
  - Muslims eat lamb, chicken, fish, but not pork.
  - Hindus are mostly (there are exceptions) strict vegetarians, even eggs are not allowed for higher castes (Brahmins), though dairy products are eaten. Lower castes in the Hindu socio-religious system eat fish and some meat freely. Even Brahmins (the highest caste) have regional exceptions: along the coasts some Brahmins eat fish, and in Kashmir (in northern India) some eat lamb, wild boar, wild birds, and fish, but not chicken, beef, or pork. Hindus regard the

RELIGION AND FOOD PROHIBITIONS

A number of world religions have proscriptions about food, which sometimes strongly determine the foods available in a country. This is particularly true in countries where one religion or another is dominant, and where that religion has strong proscriptions.

Islam

Islam prohibits the consumption of pork and dog. Other meats are permitted, provided the animals are slaughtered according to ritual rules. Alcohol is generally forbidden, though different schools of Islamic thought allow certain kinds (e.g., beer, but not wine, which is specifically prohibited in the Koran).

Hinduism

Hinduism generally prohibits the consumption of meat as impure. Vegetables, particularly pulses (beans), and milk are considered purer than other foods. Hindu society is divided into castes; the uppermost Brahmin caste maintains their purity by only eating pure foods. Lower castes tend to eat less pure things, and the lowest eat meat when possible. Cooked food cannot be offered from a lower caste to a higher one for fear of pollution. Cattle are sacred to Brahma, one of Hinduism's central deities, and, as a consequence, Hindus are completely forbidden to eat beef. (There are exceptions.)

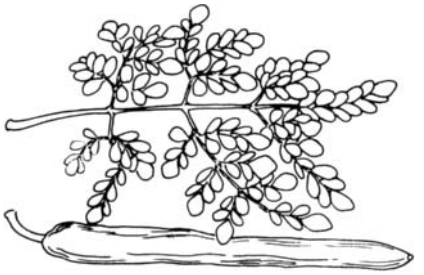
Buddhism and Jainism

Buddhism and a related religion, Jainism, generally forbid the taking of life (Jains with greater severity). In theory, Buddhists are not supposed to eat meat or fish. This is modified in Buddhist thinking by pragmatism and certain provisions in the religion. In addition, different Buddhist sects view this prohibition with lesser or greater severity. Nevertheless, in countries with a Buddhist majority, much of the cuisine is devoted to vegetarian dishes.

Judaism

Jewish law restricts meats eaten to those beasts that have cloven hoofs and chew their cud, those birds that have a crop and fly, and those fish that have scales and fins. All other animals and insects are considered unclean, except locusts (which would have been the only edible food during a locust infestation). Beasts and birds must be slaughtered according to ritual practice.

cow as sacred, and so do not eat beef. Kashmiri Hindus consider both pigs and chickens dirty. Hindu food rules are classified into strict *satwick* (only vegetables and fruit; but no onions, garlic, mushrooms) and relaxed *rajsik* (all foods except beef).
  - Christians (Syrian Christians, Anglo-Indians) eat pork and all other meat.
  - Jains eat only vegetables that grow above ground, in their belief that uprooting underground vegetables kills ground-living creatures.
  - Rural areas are mostly vegetarian, because meat is expensive.
- Dairy: Milk products used extensively throughout include, buttermilk, cottage cheese of cow or buffalo milk (*paneer*), thickened milk (*khoya*), clarified butter (*ghee*).



DRUMSTICK LEAF AND BEAN

- Fruits: temperate fruits and nuts in the North (apples, apricots, pears, almonds); tropical fruits in the South: tamarind (used widely in Tamil cooking), mango, banana, pomegranate, jackfruit, coconut, cashew, almond, pistachio.
- Vegetables: bitter melon, drumstick beans (long, bean-like fruits growing on a tree), giant *mooli* radish, chickpeas, eggplant, okra, lentils, snake gourd, leafy greens, squash.
- Drinks: fresh fruit juice (*sharbat*); mixed fruit juice with ginger, salt, and sugar (*falsa*); sweet or salty yogurt or buttermilk drinks with fruits or cucumber (*lassi*); milky sweet spiced tea; milky sweet coffee; coconut water.
- Seasonings: *garam masala* spice mix, *panch poran* (Bengali five-spice mix), herbs and hot peppers used for curries (not curry powder). Northern spicing is generally milder than Southern, except for Bengali, which is exceptionally hot.

Typical Dishes

- Tandoori chicken, *kebab*.
- Lentil soups with or without meat: *dal* (also spelled *dhal*).
- Thick curried stews of meat, poultry, or vegetables: beef *korma*, *murgh musallam*.
- Flavored rice dishes: *pulao* (also spelled *pulau*) with nuts and raisins.
- Vegetable creations: *pakoras* (onion or potato fritters), *samosa* (fried or baked pastry filled with vegetables).
- Sweets: *jalebis* (fritters in syrup), *kulfi* (various flavors of ice cream: pistachio, mango), *gulab jamun* (milk-powder dumplings in spiced syrup).
- Pickles (specialty of the desert regions of Rajasthan and Gujarat, due to traditional lack of fresh vegetables and fruits).
- Snacks: chickpea curry eaten with fried flat bread (North). *Masala dosa*: potato and vegetable curry wrapped in a crispy rice pancake (South).
- Street finger food: *puri*, deep-fried wheat bread. When stuffed with lentils, called *daal kachori*; when accompanied by puffed rice, chickpea puffs, and vegetables with a sweet-sour-spicy sauce, called *bhel puri*. *Bhajis*, *pakoras*: deep-fried vegetable fritters.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks (for those who can afford it).
- Food is eaten with the right hand only, even for the left-handed. Soupy dishes are scooped with flat bread. Strictly no sharing of food from one *thali* (brass tray) to another, to ensure the purity of the food.
- No distinction is made between courses and all food is brought at the same time, including dessert, in individual *thalis* (brass tray and dishes) or on a banana leaf in the south.
- The North has cooler climate, particularly in the higher elevations, thus heavier dishes are eaten. Due to Muslim and Mughal influence, more meat is also eaten.
- The South has a hot climate: lighter meals, mainly vegetables, rice at every meal.

- Bombay (or Mumbai) food combines north and south dishes.
- Food in Goa shows Portuguese colonial influence; in Pondicherry, French influence.
- Bengalis eat a lot of fish with rice, and are fond of milk sweets.
- Breakfast: rice cakes or flat breads, chutney, lentils, vegetables with buttermilk or curds. Tea or coffee. Alternatively, leftovers from evening meal.
- Lunch: flat bread and/or rice with at least two side dishes often from among the following: meat, poultry, fish, or vegetables; lentils; pickles; *sambar* (relish or condiment); dairy items such as raita (yogurt condiment with chopped vegetables), curds/yogurt, or a sweet or savory yogurt drink (*lassi*).
- Evening meal is the main meal: usually similar to lunch, with more side dishes.
- After meals, a traditional breath-freshener of betel nut (*paan*) is chewed with various flavorings, and lime to release the flavor. Its use is decreasing among young urbanites.
- Snacks include tea at 5 p.m. in the North (a residue of British rule), and coffee in South.
- Major cities have American fast food (pizza, burgers) and international restaurants (Chinese, Italian, Japanese, and other major cuisines).

Spice Mix (Garam Masala)

This spice mix is used both during cooking and as a last-minute addition to a dish. Curry powder as such is not used; instead each cook mixes several spices, expertly blending their flavors to achieve the desired result. Some cooks, depending on the region, will omit the black peppercorns, or add turmeric. There are also wet *masalas*, such as those used in Madras, which are steeped in oil and vinegar.

4 3-inch cinnamon sticks
2 TBS cumin seeds
2 TBS coriander seeds
1 TBS cardamom pods, shelled
1 tsp whole cloves
1 tsp black peppercorns
½ whole nutmeg

Dry roast all of the spices, except nutmeg, in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly to avoid burning.
Cool.
Grate nutmeg and mix in.
Transfer spices to a food processor or blender and blend until smooth.
Store in an airtight jar.

Spiced Scrambled Egg (Ekuri)

This simple dish reflects a Persian influence in the delicate blending of spices. Serve with fresh tomato slices and cilantro. This is also commonly eaten with fried banana and sliced green mango. Eat with easily available pita as a substitute for traditional Indian unleavened flat bread (*paratha*) for breakfast, snack, or as a side dish at lunch or dinner.

5 eggs
¼ cup milk
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
3 TBS ghee or butter
1 tsp grated fresh ginger
1 small onion, finely chopped
3 TBS cilantro, finely chopped
¼ tsp turmeric

Garnish

1 hot chili pepper, minced (optional)
½ tsp cumin
cilantro leaves
2 tomatoes, sliced

Blend the eggs, milk, salt, and pepper until evenly mixed in a bowl. Set aside.
In a heavy skillet, heat ghee or butter over medium heat.
Stir in ginger and onion, cooking until just softened.
Stir in cilantro, turmeric, and then the egg mixture.
Lower the heat and cover the skillet.
Stir the eggs occasionally and cook until the eggs are done, but still moist.
Turn off the heat.
Transfer to a warmed serving dish, sprinkle with chili pepper (if using) and cumin, and garnish with cilantro and sliced tomatoes.

Spiced Skewered Meat (Tikka Kebab)

This is a North Indian dish that shows its relationship to central Asian and Muslim cuisines. Serve as a side dish with flat bread and/or flavored rice *(pulau*), or as a snack on flat bread.

Kebabs like this are commonly eaten in the north, most frequently grilled on a skewer, but also fried as small cutlets called *shami* kebab. This is served with a cream and nut sauce (*sas*) of saffron, pistachios, almonds, cardamom, milk, cream, and ghee.

A recent street food introduced in Kolkata (Calcutta) but now available in other cities is kebabs rolled into griddle-fried bread, called *kathi* rolls.

1 ounce yellow lentils
2 cups water
1 pound ground lamb (or substitute other meat)
1 small onion, chopped
¼ tsp cardamom powder
1 bay leaf, pulverized in blender or mortar and pestle
1 TBS grated fresh ginger
¼ tsp black pepper
1 large clove garlic, minced
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp garam masala spice mix
½ tsp salt
2 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 egg yolk, beaten
¼ cup cilantro leaf, chopped
fresh bread crumbs

Place lentils and water to cook over medium heat until lentils are very soft.
Drain and set aside.
Mix thoroughly meat, onion, cardamom, bay leaf, ginger, pepper, garlic, paprika, garam masala, and salt in a bowl.
Mix in lentils.
Heat ghee over medium heat in a wok.
Add the meat-lentil mixture and stir-fry until browned. Do not allow to dry.
Refrigerate in a covered container for 2 hours.
Stir in egg yolk and cilantro.
Take a spoonful of the mixture and form into a patty. It should hold its shape. If not, mix in up to 3 TBS flour.
Form into 1 × 3-inch long rolls.
Roll each in bread crumbs.
Thread onto flat skewers and grill over charcoal to make *seekh kebabs* (*seekh* means "skewer").
Alternatively, shape into oval cutlets and deep-fry to make *shami kebabs*.

Chicken Curry (Rasedaar Murghi Taangen)

This is a main dish served for the midday or evening meal (see box "Spice Mixtures").

3 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp ground cumin
3 cardamoms
4 cloves
4 black peppercorns
1½ tsp grated fresh ginger
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 cup chopped fresh or canned tomatoes, drained
lemon juice
1 red chili pepper, seeded and chopped (optional)
8 chicken legs
salt to taste
½ cup yogurt
1 cup hot water
3 TBS fresh cilantro
1 tsp *garam masala*
1 TBS fresh lemon juice

In a saucepan, heat ghee over medium heat.
Stir in onion, garlic, cumin, cardamoms, cloves, and peppercorns, and sauté until the onion is softened.
Stir in ginger, turmeric, tomatoes, lemon juice, chili pepper, chicken, and salt.
Cover pan, bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
Mix yogurt and hot water. Stir into chicken mixture. Sprinkle with 1 TBS cilantro.
Simmer for another 20–30 minutes or until chicken is tender.
To serve, transfer into a heated serving dish and sprinkle with *garam masala*, remaining cilantro and lemon juice.

SPICE MIXTURES

Spice mixtures are used in cuisines across the world. They are structured to enhance the qualities of any spice by the addition of others, to soften accents, and to provide more complex flavors. In the modern world, they also make it easier on the cook. Some well-known spice mixtures are *baharat* (Turkey and the Persian Gulf), *berberé* (Horn of Africa), five-spice powder (China), curry powder (South Africa and UK, other Indian-influenced cuisines), *garam masala* (India), jerk (Jamaica), *khmeli-suneli* (Georgia and Georgian-influenced areas such as the former USSR), *quatre épices* (France), *ras el hanout* (Morocco), *shichimi togarashi* (Japan), *za'atar* (Levant). These often contain either pepper or chili powder, or both, and various aromatic spices peculiar to the area. There are numerous local, regional, and home variants on basic themes.

Spice mixtures are used in the preparation of sauces, as condiments on their own, to flavor dishes such as roasts and stews. Quite often specific spice mixtures are considered culinary secrets and their precise makeup not disclosed to outsiders. Some characteristic spice-mixture bases include cinnamon-chili-coriander (Morocco), turmeric-cumin-fenugreek (India), chili-mountain ash (China and Japan), and allspice-chili (Caribbean).

Vegetables in Coconut Sauce (Aviyal)

The use of coconut oil in this dish is typical of South Indian cooking. Ghee is not used as extensively as in the North. *Aviyal* is eaten at lunch or in the evening, during the main meal. It is served with plain and/or flavored rice. Other accompaniments are lentils and leafy vegetables, a mango oil pickle or chutney, and one or two fried lentil crisps (*pappadums*).

Other vegetables used in *aviyal* are eggplant, bitter gourd, drumstick beans, potato, jackfruit seeds, green mango, or tender coconut slices.

3 TBS coconut or other vegetable oil
¼ tsp black mustard seeds (if not available, use regular mustard seed)
2 TBS grated fresh ginger
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 TBS coriander powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
¼ cup water
2 8-ounce cans coconut milk
1 tsp salt
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cubed
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cubed
1 carrot, peeled and cubed
1 cauliflower, separated into small (about 1 × 1-inch) florets
4 green onions, cut into 2-inch long pieces
1 green chili pepper (optional)
3 TBS fresh cilantro, chopped

Heat the oil over medium heat.
Stir in mustard seeds, ginger, and garlic, and fry for 30 seconds.
Stir in onion and cook until golden.
Stir in coriander powder, turmeric, water, coconut milk, and salt.

Let it come to a boil.
Add vegetables and stir. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Check occasionally and stir to make sure that the coconut milk is not burning.
Add up to ¼ cup water if necessary, only pouring a little at a time. The dish is meant to be thick, not soupy.
Take off the heat. Stir in cilantro, check the seasoning, adding more salt if necessary. Cover and let stand for a few minutes.
Transfer into a heated serving dish.

Cauliflower and Potatoes (Gobi Aloo)

This vegetable curry is served as a side dish at lunch or dinner. Peas (1 cup) may be added, if desired, or carrots may be substituted for the cauliflower.

3 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 tsp mustard seeds
2 bay leaves
2 cardamom pods
3 cloves
1 onion, chopped fine
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp cumin seeds
3 medium potatoes, quartered
1 large cauliflower, cut into florets, washed and drained
½ tsp turmeric
1 cup water
salt to taste

Garnish

1 tsp *garam masala*
3 TBS chopped cilantro

In a saucepan, heat the ghee over medium heat.
Add mustard seeds and let pop (about 30 seconds), stirring constantly.
Add bay leaves, cardamom, and cloves. Cook, stirring, until fragrant (another 30 seconds).
Stir in onion and fry until softened.
Stir in coriander and cumin.
Add potatoes and cauliflower and fry, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes.
Add turmeric, water, and salt, and bring to a boil.
Cover, lower heat, and cook for 20–30 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.
To serve, garnish with *garam masala* and cilantro.

Mango Ice Cream
(Aam ki Kulfi, *also* Aam Kulfi)

As far back as the sixteenth century, ice cream was already a regular sweet in the Mughal imperial courts. It was flavored with local fruits and nuts, especially pistachios. This is a contemporary recipe.

1 can condensed milk
12 ounces whipped cream
1 12-ounce can mango pulp

In a blender or food processor, mix all ingredients until smooth.
Transfer to an ice-cream freezer and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
Alternatively, pour into a covered plastic container and freeze for 3 hours.
Remove from freezer and beat thoroughly with fork or electric mixer.
For a finer texture repeat freezing and beating step once or twice more.
Transfer into small individual bowls for serving. Let freeze another 1–2 hours until solid.

Yogurt Sharbat (Meethi Sharbat)

Sharbat refers to a cold drink, often made with fresh fruits or yogurt. Serve this during lunch or dinner.

2 cups plain yogurt
4 TBS sugar
1 TBS vanilla
2 cups cold water
1 cup crushed ice
½ cup flaked toasted almonds

In a blender, mix the yogurt, sugar, vanilla, and water until smooth.
Distribute the ice into four glasses.
Pour the sharbat into the glasses.
Garnish with almonds.

Carrot Halva

"Halva" is a Persian word meaning a sweet, and the word (though possibly not the dish) was imported to India through many centuries of contact between the two civilizations. The original recipe called for fresh milk and sugar cooked for 3–4 hours until thickened. Condensed milk achieves the same result in less time. Serve this with milky tea.

1 pound carrots (4–5), grated
1 12-ounce can condensed milk
1½ cups ground almonds
3 TBS ghee or butter
seeds of 5 cardamom pods, crushed with a rolling pin
⅓ cup pistachio nuts or almonds, chopped

Microwave the carrots in a covered dish for 5–7 minutes until very tender. Drain.
In a saucepan, pour in the condensed milk.

Stir in cooked carrots, almonds, and ghee.
Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until dry and the mass no longer sticks to the sides of the pan, about 10–15 minutes.
Remove from heat, and stir in the cardamom.
Transfer to a serving dish, mounding it in the center.
Garnish with nuts.
Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.

INDONESIA

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago—over 17,000 islands of which 6,000 are inhabited, and four (Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Java) are among the largest in the world—and the fourth most populous country. For over 300 years a Dutch colony (and partly Portuguese, in East Timor), Indonesia proclaimed independence in 1945. Located on the equator ranging along the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, Indonesia has hot, humid coastal lowlands where rice, maize, and other tropical crops are grown, and milder interior highlands suited to coffee and livestock-raising. With its petroleum and natural gas resources, it is a member of the oil cartel OPEC.

Over 300 languages are spoken in Indonesia's multiethnic society of mostly Javanese, Chinese, and other groups of Malay-Polynesian and Papuan ethnic stock. Islam, often mixed with Hindu-Buddhism, *adat* (traditional custom and law) and animism, is the predominant religion: Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population. The island of Bali is predominantly Hindu; the Papuan residents of the island of Irian Jaya are mainly Christian and animist. Indonesian cuisine is rich and complex, characterized by sophisticated use of spices from Arab and Indian cultures via Islam, fiery-hot chili seasoning (for which the Padang region is nationally famous), aromatic herbs and coconut milk, as well as Chinese and European influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice, corn (maize) in Eastern Java, other root crops (cassava, sweet potato).
- Poultry, beef, pork (not for Muslims but Hindus and other groups), eggs.
- Vegetables: soybean, leafy vegetables, eggplant, unripe papaya and jackfruit, squash, eggplant, breadfruit.
- Fruits: banana (hundreds of varieties), mango, durian, and other tropical fruit such as snakefruit (*salak*, which has a brown snakeskin patterned shell), custard apple, starfruit.
- Seasonings: peanut sauce, *trasi* and *blachan* (fish or shrimp paste), sweet soy sauce (*kecap manis*), ginger relatives *galangal* and *kencur*, chilies, coriander, garlic, cinnamon, coconut.

Typical Dishes

- Fried rice (*nasi goreng*).
- Soups of meat and vegetables called *soto* or *sop*; spicy chicken or beef broth (*bakso*) with fish or meat; rice porridge with chicken (*bubur ayam*), often eaten with *cah-weh* (fried Chinese bread stick).
- Spicy stews of poultry, beef or fish and vegetables, with or without coconut milk. The terms *rendang* and *semur* refer to the stewing process, and are followed by the main ingredient term such as beef (*daging*) or chicken (*ayam*).
- Grilled or barbecued meats or fish on skewers (*sate*, also *satay*) with spicy peanut sauce.
- Vegetable dishes: salad with peanut sauce (*gado gado*); stewed vegetables in coconut milk (*sayur lodeh*).
- Fermented soybean products: *tempeh* (fermented whole bean slabs); soy sauce (called *kecap*, pronounced "ketchup"); soybean curd (*taho*).
- Sweets: rice pastries made with coconut milk.
- Drinks: *kopi Bali* (Balinese coffee) is like Turkish coffee, dark and thick; fresh fruit juices (coconut, passion fruit, durian, papaya); mixed fruit and tapioca juices (*cendol*, *es campur*); *brem* (rice wine); *toeak* (Balinese palm juice beer).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Traditional families eat on a mat set on the floor or around a table. Rice and side-dishes—mainly vegetable based, with some meat if affordable—are placed in the center.
- Household members normally eat when they can, so rice and side dishes are cooked once a day, and everyone helps themselves. Diners eat with right hands only, or with a spoon.
- Breakfast: just sweet coffee or substantial meal of fried rice with egg and iced tea.
- Lunch, heaviest meal of the day: rice with several side dishes of soup, vegetables, meat or fish, dessert.
- Dinner: same as lunch but lighter; often lunch leftovers, dessert.
- Desserts: mainly fruits or fermented sweet rice or cassava (*tapé*).
- Snacks, often from street stalls: noodles, skewered dishes (*sate*), banana fritters (*pisang goreng*), fried dumplings (*pangsit*).

Spinach or Watercress Soup
(Sop Bayam Jahe)

Soups are not served as a separate course but as part of the main meal as a side dish, especially if it is thick and includes many ingredients. There are several terms for soup: *soto*, almost a complete meal in itself; *sop*, a light, thin broth; and *bakso*, a spicy broth. The most popular soup is chicken (*soto ayam*). The following soup uses green vegetables common in the West; in Indonesia native leafy vegetables would of course be used. The chicken can be left out, or else substituted for other meat or fish, if desired. Serve as a side dish with rice and a fish or meat course.

2 TBS oil
2 TBS grated fresh ginger
2 tsp peanut butter, crunchy or smooth
5 cups chicken stock
1 cup boneless chicken breast, diced
2 cups fresh spinach or watercress, cut into 2-inch lengths
1 tsp cornstarch
1 TBS water
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 TBS soy sauce
½ tsp brown sugar
salt and pepper to taste

In a covered saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir-fry ginger until fragrant, about 2 minutes.
Stir in peanut butter, mixing well, then add chicken stock.
Bring to a boil; and stir in chicken.
Return to a boil and stir in chosen greens.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 3 minutes.
In a small bowl, dissolve cornstarch in water.
Mix in the rest of the ingredients and stir thoroughly into the soup.
Simmer for another 2 minutes.
Serve hot.

Fried Chili and Tomato Sauce
(Sambal Tomat Tumis)

An Indonesian meal would be incomplete without an accompaniment of fiercely hot chili sauce (*sambal*). Traditionally these sauces were made by pounding in a mortar and pestle. A blender or food processor makes it easy to re-create this sauce. The amount of chili has been considerably toned down to suit American tastes. Omit the chili and let diners add a drop or two of any pepper sauce, if desired, at the table. Serve in a small bowl (see box "'Central-Bowl' and 'Individual-Bowl' Rice Cultures").

Trasi and *blachan* are characteristic flavorings made of highly salted (for preservation) tiny fish or shrimp. *Blachan* (also *belachan*) comes in block form and is sliced and often fried or roasted before using. Similar fish or seafood sauces are used in Malaysia, Singapore and other parts of Southeast Asia.

1 cup very ripe tomatoes
1 small fresh or dried chili (or substitute 2 drops Tabasco or similar hot sauce)
1 clove garlic
1 TBS fresh grated ginger
1 tsp brown sugar
1 tsp salt or anchovy sauce or salted shrimp paste (*trasi* or *blachan*)
2 tsp lime or lemon juice
3 TBS oil

Place all ingredients except oil into a food processor or blender and puree until smooth.
Heat oil over medium heat in a wok.

Stir in pureed ingredients and cook for about 10 minutes, until thick.
Serve at once. This keeps well for about 2 weeks, refrigerated in a closed jar.

"CENTRAL-BOWL" AND "INDIVIDUAL-BOWL" RICE CULTURES

In the cultures of eastern Asia where rice is the major staple, two distinct styles of consuming rice have emerged. The most common (in terms of population) is individual bowl culture. In this, each diner has an individual bowl of rice from which he or she eats. Side dishes—cooked vegetables, fish, and meat—are most often served on plates, which everyone shares. This is most common in China. In central rice bowl culture, each diner has individual dishes of vegetables, meat or fish. The rice (or sometimes some other staple) is placed in a tray or basin in the middle for all to share. These cultural practices are separated geographically (though the line is gradually being erased in the modern world): a line running roughly from Taiwanese aborigines, through southern China and midway through Indo-China, separated central-bowl cultures to the south from individual-bowl cultures to the north.

Fried Rice (Nasi Goreng)

This is a quick meal made from leftover rice, often served for breakfast or any other time. It is also the most well-known Indonesian dish, often served together with another famous national specialty: *sate* or skewered barbecued meats. Fried rice is most often served with eggs, as shreds of omelet mixed into the fried rice itself, or sunny-side up as a garnish (known as *mata sapi* or cow's eyes). Thin cucumber slices can grace the sides of the dish, as well as fried shallots and shrimp crackers (*krupuk*). Serve with *es teh manis* (sweet iced tea) or coffee.

2 TBS oil
4 eggs, well beaten
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS peanut oil
8 shallots, or 1 medium onion, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 or 2 red chili peppers, cored and seeded, chopped fine (optional)
2 green onions, chopped
2 cups cooked boneless chicken meat (leftover roast or fried meat or sausage), diced
4 portions white cooked rice
1 TBS dark (*kecap manis* or Chinese) soy sauce
Garnish per serving:
3–4 thin cucumber slices
1 TBS shredded omelet
2 fried bananas (sliced in half lengthwise)

Heat oil in a wok or wide, heavy frying pan.
Pour in eggs and season lightly with salt and pepper. Brown on one side, then turn over and cook until omelet is cooked through.
Remove from pan and shred. Set aside.
Add peanut oil to wok and heat over high heat. Stir in shallots, garlic, red chili pepper, and green onions, and fry for 1 minute.

(*continued*)

Reduce heat to medium and fry for an additional minute until vegetables are soft.
Stir in chosen meat and cook for 1 minute.
Add omelet shreds (reserve a bit for garnish), rice, and soy sauce. Cook, stirring, until rice is heated through, about 5–10 minutes. Taste and correct seasoning, if necessary.
Serve garnished with thinly sliced cucumber, omelet shreds, and slices of fried banana.

Spicy Meat and Coconut Burger (Rempah)

This is usually made with beef or tender young goat meat, but ground chicken, turkey, or pork may be used as well. Serve this with rice, soup, and vegetables for lunch or dinner.

1 pound ground beef or lamb
1¼ cups desiccated coconut, refreshed with ¼ cup warm milk for 15 minutes
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp powdered coriander
¼ tsp powdered cumin
1 egg, beaten
salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup flour
2 TBS (or more) oil

In a bowl, blend thoroughly the meat, coconut, garlic, spices, egg, and seasoning.
Divide mixture into twelve portions; shape into patties.
Dust patties with flour on both sides.
Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat.
Place patties in skillet, a few at a time.
Shallow fry for 5–7 minutes on each side.
Keep warm until all the patties are cooked.
Serve hot.

Chicken Stew (Opor Ayam)

The coconut milk in this dish is typical of Javanese dishes. This is served as a main dish with rice, accompanied by vegetables and soup.

4 shallots, or 1 small onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 inch fresh ginger root, peeled, sliced
5 candlenuts (*kemiri*, available from Asian stores); substitute 10 whole cashew or 5 macadamia nuts
1 tsp ground coriander
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp ground cumin
4 TBS vegetable oil

1 tender chicken, cut into serving pieces, or 4 large portions (quarters or legs)
4 bay leaves
1 stalk lemongrass or 1 tsp grated lemon rind
1 pint coconut milk
1 pint water
salt and pepper to taste

In a food processor or blender, process to a paste the shallots, garlic, ginger, nuts, coriander, turmeric, and cumin.
Heat oil in a large wok over medium heat. Stir-fry spice paste for 2 minutes, taking care not to burn it.
Stir in 1 cup water. Add chicken, bay leaves, and lemongrass.
Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat. Simmer for 20 minutes.
Stir in coconut milk and seasoning; simmer gently for another 20–30 minutes, adding water if necessary to keep sauce from becoming too thick. Stir occasionally and adjust heat to prevent coconut milk from burning.
Serve on white rice. Remove lemongrass before serving.

Vegetables and Bean Curd in Black Bean Sauce
(Sayur Taucho)

This dish uses three types of soybean products: tofu and fermented black beans, which are originally Chinese, and *tempeh*, which is an Indonesian original. *Tempeh* is made of whole soybeans fermented until it develops a white skin similar to that on soft French cheeses such as Camembert or Brie. *Tempeh* is sold refrigerated or frozen in health-food stores as well as in some Oriental groceries; defrost the night before using. If *tempeh* is unavailable, increase tofu to 3 pieces. Tofu is also sold already fried.

Galangal or *laos* is a root related to ginger with a more citrusy scent. Increase the amount of ginger if *galangal* is unavailable. *Salam* leaves (*Eugenia polyantha,* also known as Indonesian bay leaf, though the taste is dissimilar) may be hard to obtain; they can be omitted. The fermented black beans are already salty. Check the seasoning before serving, and add salt if needed.

oil (enough for deep-frying)
2 blocks firm bean curd (*tofu*), diced
1 8-ounce pack *tempeh*, diced
1 onion, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 TBS *galangal*, grated
4 *salam* leaves (optional)
1 stalk lemongrass, bruised
1–2 green chilies, cored, seeded, cut into rings (optional)
1 pound green beans
1 8-ounce can coconut milk
2–3 TBS canned fermented black beans (*taucho*, also called salted soybeans)
2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped

Deep-fry *tofu* and *tempeh* in a wok or large skillet until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and set aside.

(*continued*)

Pour off all but 2–3 TBS oil.
Stir-fry onion and garlic; when softened add ginger, *galangal*, *salam* leaves, lemongrass, and chilies (if using).
Increase heat to high and add green beans, stir-fry for 5 minutes.
Stir in coconut milk and reduce heat to low.
Simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in black beans, tofu, *tempeh* and tomatoes; simmer for 10 more minutes or until tofu and *tempeh* are heated through.
Serve hot.

Pork Stewed in Sweet Soy Sauce
(Be Celeng Base Manis)

Although most Indonesians are Muslims and thus shun pork, on the island of Bali, where most are Hindus, pork is widely eaten. In fact the Balinese favorite is spit-roasted suckling pig (*babi guling*), often sold in piles of mixed crisp crackling, juicy meat chunks and assorted innards, to be eaten with rice and spicy sauce.

This sweet hot and spicy pork dish is often served on festive occasions. In rural areas (without supermarkets), it is the custom to slaughter a whole pig to provide meat for the huge number of expected guests. The various portions are made into several dishes. The original recipe called for 6–10 chilies; an alternative is to leave out the chilies and pass a hot chili sauce at the table for diners to help themselves.

To serve this at lunch or dinner, accompany with plain white or fried rice, soup, and a vegetable dish.

2 TBS coconut or other oil
5 shallots, or 1 medium onion, sliced
2 cloves garlic, sliced
1 pound boneless pork, cut into 1-inch cubes
3 inches fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
4 TBS sweet soy sauce (*kecap manis*, or substitute dark Chinese soy sauce)
2 TBS soy sauce
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 cups chicken stock
2 bird's eye chilies, left whole (optional)

Heat oil in a wok or a heavy saucepan, over medium heat.
Stir-fry shallots and garlic for 2 minutes or until lightly colored.
Stir in pork and ginger; raise heat to high and continue to fry for 2 more minutes.
Add both types of soy sauce and pepper; sauté for 1 minute.
Pour in chicken stock and chilies (if using); lower heat and simmer for about 40 minutes or until tender.
There should be very little sauce left: the meat will be a glistening dark brown. If the meat dries out before it is tender, add a bit of chicken stock.

Fried Beef Dumplings (Pangsit)

These small, crisp, wonton-like snacks are sold by street vendors all over Indonesia, and reflect the influence of Chinese settlers. Substitute ground chicken meat or pork, as desired. Serve as an appetizer or snack with drinks. Or, as a side dish for a main meal, serve with rice, soup, and vegetables.

2 TBS oil
1 pound ground beef
½ onion, minced fine
2 green onions, minced fine
40 wonton wrappers (available from Oriental stores), about 3 inches square
salt and pepper to taste
white of 1 egg, beaten lightly
oil for deep-frying

Heat oil over high heat in a wok and thoroughly brown the meat, about 5–7 minutes.
Transfer meat to a bowl.
Clean and dry the wok. Add oil for deep-frying; warm gradually to 350°F.
Add both types of onions to meat; mix well, and season.
Take a wonton wrapper and put 1 teaspoon of meat mixture in the lower half of each wrapper.
Roll up the wrapper like a thick cigarette.
Moisten ends with egg white and crimp to seal.
Fry a few at a time in hot oil; drain, and serve immediately.

Coconut-filled Pancake Rolls (Dadar Gulung)

These coconut-filled sweets are eaten as dessert or snack. They are ideally made with unrefined brown sugar from Java with its molasses-like aroma and fresh grated coconut. Serve with hot or iced tea or coffee.

Filling

1 cup freshly grated coconut (substitute desiccated coconut, refreshed by soaking with ¼ cup warm milk for 20 minutes)
5 TBS dark brown sugar
1 TBS granulated sugar
1 3-inch cinnamon stick, broken in half
pinch of salt

Mix coconut, both types of sugar, cinnamon, and salt.
Dry fry the mixture in a wok or large skillet over low heat, stirring continuously for about 5 minutes, or until mixture is dry.
Remove cinnamon stick; set mixture aside.

(*continued*)

Pancake Batter

½ cup rice or all purpose wheat flour
¼ cup cornstarch
⅔ cups coconut milk
¼ tsp salt
2 to 3 drops green food coloring (optional)
1 egg
vegetable oil

In a blender or food processor, blend the rice flour, cornstarch, coconut milk, salt, food coloring (if using), and egg until smooth.
Lightly oil an 8-inch skillet, and heat over medium heat.
Pour about 3 tablespoons of batter into hot skillet. Tilt pan to spread batter into a thin layer.
Let cook for one minute; turn over and cook for another minute. Remove and keep warm.
Repeat until all the batter is used up.
To make rolls, lay a pancake on a plate.
Place 2 tablespoons of coconut filling on the edge of the pancake nearest to you.
Fold over once; then fold over the left and the right sides, and fold over once more. Press lightly to evenly distribute filling.
Serve at room temperature.

Mixed Fruit Drink (Es Teler)

Mixed fruits in milk and shaved ice make refreshing desserts and popular snacks. Serve in glass or ceramic bowls. If coconut milk is available, pour a bit in addition to the condensed milk or cream.

1 ripe avocado, diced
8 segments fresh or canned jack fruit, diced
1 cup young coconut meat, fresh or canned (sold in cans in Oriental stores), diced
1 cup sugar palm fruit (sold in cans in Oriental stores), increase coconut if not available
shaved ice
1 8-ounce can condensed milk or thick cream
sugar (if using cream)

Distribute ingredients among four bowls.
Top with shaved ice.
Transfer condensed milk or cream into a serving bowl or jug.
Pass condensed milk or cream and sugar for diners to help themselves.

IRAN

The easternmost of the Middle Eastern countries and the largest, the country has been at various times an independent kingdom, center of an empire, or occupied by others (Greeks, Arabs, Turkmen, Mongols). The country is largely composed of high plateau deserts with hot summers and cool or cold (in the mountains) winters. Wheat, rice, fish (from the Caspian Sea), fruit (notably pomegranates, apricots, melons) and nuts (notably pistachios) are produced.

The Iranian population is composed largely of Persians, with significant Turkmen, Kurdish, and other minorities. Most of the population is Shi'ite Muslims, and other religions are barely tolerated or forbidden.

Iranian cuisine has a lengthy history, and has influenced others more than being influenced itself, though Turkish and Indian influences can be found. Though once famous for its wines, wine is currently forbidden, as is pork. Iran also has a lengthy history of food writing and cookbooks which has been preserved since the Middle Ages.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: Iranian cuisine prides itself on its rice dishes, and some say there is a rice dish for every day of the year.
- Meat: preferred meats are lamb and beef.
- Fruits: pomegranates, figs, grapes, apricots, watermelon (which is also dried), melons. Tamarind (literally "Indian date") is used for flavoring.
- Vegetables: carrots, onions, and garlic, beans and other pulses, tomatoes, peppers.
- Flavoring principles are complex and include pomegranate, saffron, rosewater, and fruits.
- Currently a rigidly Islamic country, wine and liquor are formally forbidden.

Typical Dishes

- *Pilaf*, rice cooked with finely chopped fruit, vegetables, and/or meat is eaten at any time, and has many variants outside Iran.
- Rich stews often flavored with pomegranate juice and seeds.
- Various stuffed fish, meat, and vegetables.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are eaten, with snacks. The major meal of the day is in the evening.
- Families generally eat together, sitting on a carpet on the floor, with shared dishes in the center.
- Traditionally, foods are eaten with the right hand. Spoons and forks are becoming common as well.
- Iranians love eating outside, particularly during *Now Ruz*, the Persian New Year in the spring, when families go to eat out among the new blossoms.
- Tea accompanies most meals and is drunk constantly during the day.

White Rice (Chelo Safeed)

This is one of the simplest ways to make rice Iranian-style.

3 cups white long grain (Basmati type) rice
6 cups water
4 TBS of cooking oil
3–4 medium size potatoes or onions sliced into $\frac{1}{4}$-inch disks
4 ounces water
salt to taste

Soak the rice for a few hours in hot water to cover and some salt before cooking.
Bring 6 cups water to a boil in a medium-size pot.
Add the rice (and the water it was soaked in), and let it cook for about 7–10 minutes after it returns to a boil.
Check the rice: when the rice is half-crunchy half-soft, remove from heat and drain in a colander or sieve.
Rinse briefly under the faucet.
Put oil and 4 ounces water in a heavy-bottomed pot, lay the salted potato or onion slices at the bottom, then pile up the rice loosely on the vegetables.
With the handle of a wooden spoon, make five holes, one in the center and four around it so that the rice can breath during the cooking process.
Cover with a tight lid.
Cook for a couple of minutes on high heat. When the rice starts to steam, change heat to medium and cook for about 15 minutes.
Lower heat to medium-low, sprinkle some cooking oil on rice to stop it from drying, and let it cook for another 10 minutes until rice is soft.
Traditionally, the rice is served covered by a layer of rice dyed with saffron (yellow) or beet juice (purple).
Serve on its own or with a meat dish.

Eggplant Stew (Khoresht Badenjan)

Eggplant is an important vegetable in Iranian cuisine, eaten frequently. Serve with white rice.

2 eggplants
½ cup oil
2 onions, chopped
1 tsp turmeric powder
salt and pepper to taste
1 pound boneless leg of lamb, turkey, or beef, sliced into 1-inch cubes
3 tsp tomato paste
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
⅔ cup unripe grapes (or substitute ripe but firm ones)
juice of 1 lemon
3 TBS parsley (flat leaf, preferably), minced, for garnish

Peel the eggplant and cut into ¼-inch-thick slices. Lay them on a cutting board or tray, sprinkle with salt, and leave for about 20 minutes. Wash off the brown drops that accumulate, and wipe dry with paper towels.

Shallow fry in hot oil until golden brown on both sides (eggplants love oil and you may need to add some more). Set aside to drain on paper towels.

Fry the onions in 2 tablespoons oil (top up or use any remaining oil from frying the eggplants) until golden brown. Add the turmeric, salt, pepper, and meat, and stir-fry until the meat has changed color.

Add the tomato paste, tomatoes, grapes, lemon juice, and, if necessary, water to cover.

Cover and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Add the eggplant and, if needed, a little more water.

Simmer, covered, for 30 minutes more, or until meat is tender.

To serve, ladle the meat and sauce in the middle of a warmed serving dish. Surround with eggplant slices, and sprinkle with minced parsley.

Stuffed Fish (Mahi Sefeed)

This is a traditional *Now Ruz* (New Year) dish.

1 cup dried tamarind paste (available from Asian shops)
1 cup warm water
4 TBS oil
1 large onion, quartered and thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 bell pepper, red or green, cored, seeded, and sliced into strips
2 red chili peppers, left whole (optional)
2 cups fresh parsley, minced
½ cup cilantro, chopped
salt and pepper to taste
1 whole white-fleshed fish (about 2 pounds), gutted and cleaned, head and tail left on

(*continued*)

Place the tamarind paste in a bowl. Pour warm water over and rub paste with your fingers to separate the seeds from the pulp. Discard seeds and sieve the pulp, pressing to extract all the juices. Set aside.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a frying pan. Stir-fry the onion, garlic, and bell and chili peppers.
Add parsley and cilantro. Season with salt and pepper. Fry for a few more minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
Heat oven to 350°F. Place the fish in a Pyrex or ceramic baking dish (that will also be used for serving at the table).
Mix a third of the tamarind puree with the vegetable mixture, and stuff into the fish cavity.
Season the remaining tamarind sauce with salt and pepper, mix with remaining 2 tablespoons oil, and pour over the fish.
Cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake for ½ hour.
Remove foil to let the fish brown.
Bake for another ½ hour or less, just until fish is nicely browned and flakes easily.
Serve with rice.

Barley Soup (Ash-e Jow)

Barley soup is often used to break the fast in the evening during Ramadan, the month of fasting.

2 TBS oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 cup barley
½ cup green or red lentils
1 cup cooked chickpeas or kidney beans
6 cups water
½ cup fresh parsley, minced
1 tsp turmeric powder
salt and pepper to taste
3 TBS mint, minced

Heat oil and fry onion until softened.
Add barley, lentils, chickpeas, water, parsley, and turmeric, and gently bring to a boil.
Simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Season and simmer for 15–20 minutes.
Remove from heat and stir in mint.
Serve with feta cheese and salad.

Lamb and Spinach Stew
(Khoresh-e Esfanaj)

Lamb is a favorite dish and this stew would be served for the evening meal with rice.

½ cup olive oil
2 pounds, stewing lamb (or mutton) with bones, cubed
2 onions, chopped
1 tsp turmeric powder
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup beef stock (or 1 cube beef bouillon dissolved in 1 cup warm water)
¾ cup lemon juice
1 fresh (or frozen, defrosted) spinach leaves, chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
1 leek, white part only, chopped
2 TBS fresh dill, minced
½ cup fresh or frozen peas
3 TBS fresh parsley, minced
2 TBS fresh mint, minced

Heat 2 TBS oil in a saucepan over medium heat, and brown the meat and onions.
Season with the turmeric, salt, and pepper.
Add the stock and lemon juice.
Cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Dry-fry the spinach, celery, and leek in a heavy pan over low heat, stirring constantly.
When the vegetables are softened, stir in the remaining oil and fry for 5 minutes.
Add to the meat with dill, and simmer gently for 40–45 minutes, or until meat is tender.
(about 40 minutes).
Stir in peas, parsley, and mint, and simmer for an additional 5 minutes.
Serve hot with rice.

Sweet Paste (Halva)

In Sufi (a meditative Islamic sect originating in Persia) thought, halva represents the bounty of God. Halva is eaten as a snack or to conclude a meal.

8 ounces oil
12 ounces flour
1 cup water
½ cup rosewater
8 ounces sugar

Garnish

¼ cup finely chopped almonds mixed with ¼ cup finely chopped pistachios, or
1 TBS powdered sugar mixed with 1 TBS powdered cinnamon

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat.
Gradually pour in the flour, stirring constantly until the mixture is smooth and golden brown. Set aside.
Make a syrup by mixing the water, rosewater and sugar in a separate pot. Cook over low heat until the sugar dissolves.
Stir the syrup into the flour, mix well, and cook for a few minutes over medium heat until thickened. Remove from heat, and let cool slightly for 10–15 minutes.
Transfer the paste into a lightly oiled 2½–3 pint capacity jelly mold.
To serve, unmold and sprinkle with chosen garnish.

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JEANNE JACOB

MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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Illustrations by Jeanne Jacob and Maayan Ashkenazi.

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IRAQ

At times divided among local kingdoms, part or center of an empire, Iraq has also been occupied by various foreign powers. Desert makes up most of its territory, and the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, create a well-watered wide stretch of arable land. With mild winters and hot summers, various Mediterranean-type crops are grown.

The population comprises Arabs, Persians, and Kurds, with mixtures of smaller ethnic groups such as Assyrians. Muslims (Arab and Kurdish Sunnis and Arab Shi'ites) constitute a majority of the population.

Iraq has one of the most ancient cuisines, recorded since the days of the Sumerian kingdoms, about 5,000 years ago.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice and wheat.
- The preferred meats in Iraq are lamb, beef, goat, mutton, and poultry (pork is not eaten). Fish are caught in the Tigris and the Euphrates (though the catch has declined due to overuse of the waters and damming) and in the canals.
- Vegetables include onions and garlic, beans and peas, various greens, eggplants, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, cucumbers.
- Fruit include melons and watermelons, figs, pomegranates, and many varieties of dates, some of them world famous and major exports. Grapes are grown in the north.
- Milk products include soft cheeses, yogurts, and butter.

Typical Dishes

- Popular main courses include skewered chunks of grilled meat; roasted and stuffed lamb; and *kibbe*, which is minced meat with nuts, raisins, and spices.
- *Labaneh*, a soft cheese made by draining natural yogurt, is eaten with olive oil and is also used in cooking.
- Pastries are very sweet and often include dates.
- The most widely consumed drinks in Iraq are black, bitter coffee (essential for hospitality) and sweet, milkless tea.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and plentiful snacks are consumed by all urbanites and many villagers. Most meals are accompanied by flat rounds of bread.
- Families generally prefer to eat the morning and evening meals together. Individual settings are common among townspeople, while villagers tend to share a central dish, eating only with the right hand.
- Breakfast: bread, vegetables, or a salad, olive oil, cheese (usually *labaneh*) pastry washed down with tea or sometimes milk or yogurt.
- Lunch: a variety of salads; grilled meat on a skewer, or fish or chicken; tomatoes and other vegetables; fruit.
- Dinner: similar to lunch, but often more elaborate.

Pomegranate Soup (Shorbat Rumman)

This is an unusual, refreshingly sour, soup for a hot evening.

4 cups water
½ pound lamb (turkey, beef, or chicken) on the bone
¼ cup yellow split peas
½ cup onion, chopped
2 beets, peeled and diced (preferably with tops, chopped fine)
¼ cup rice
½ bunch scallions (green and white parts), sliced
1 TBS sugar
2 TBS lime juice
¼ cup parsley
1 TBS pomegranate concentrate (available from Middle Eastern and South Asian stores and sometimes labeled "pomegranate molasses")
¼ cup cilantro, finely minced
1 cup spinach, finely chopped
1 TBS dried mint, crumbled, mixed with ¼ TBS each cinnamon and freshly ground black pepper for garnish

Bring water, meat, split peas, and onion to a boil in a large pot.
Skim froth if necessary.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for an hour or until meat is tender.
Add the beets and rice and cook for 30–40 minutes.
Remove meat. Discard bone and fat. Shred meat and return to the pot with scallions, sugar, half of the lime juice, parsley, and pomegranate concentrate.
Simmer for 15 minutes.
Just before serving, bring to a boil and stir in beet tops (if using) and spinach.
Remove from heat.
Stir in cilantro, more lime juice, if needed, seasonings, and garnish.
Serve hot in bowls.

Plain Rice (Timman)

Plain white rice is the center of all major meals and is served with a variety of meat or vegetable dishes.

1½ cups long-grain rice, washed and drained
2 TBS olive oil
plenty of water

Place rice in a large pot with water to cover by 3–4 inches.
Bring to a boil and cook for no more than 5 minutes. It should just be slightly soft on the outside.
Remove from heat and drain rice thoroughly in a colander.
Return the pot to the heat. Add oil and stir in rice.
Cover with a well-fitting lid.
Cook on lowest heat for 20 minutes, or until fluffy.
The crisp, slightly burned, layer at the bottom is considered a delicacy.

"Judge's Tongue": Eggplant-Wrapped Meat (Lissan el Quadi)

This is served as a main dish in the evening, or as an element in a feast. Eggplant is a ubiquitous vegetable, appearing in various guises at every meal.

2 large eggplants
about 1 cup vegetable oil (if frying eggplant, less if oven-roasting)
salt
3–4 medium tomatoes, sliced crosswise, ¼-inch thick

Stuffing

2 pounds ground meat
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper

Sauce

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
3 cups fresh or canned chopped tomato
1 cup tomato puree or paste
1 cup stock
½ cup lemon juice
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 tsp turmeric powder

Trim the eggplants. Cut lengthwise into ⅛-inch-thick slices.
Sprinkle with salt and leave on a tray for about 15–20 minutes.
Rinse off the accumulated brown juice and pat eggplants dry with paper towels.
Heat about 2 tablespoons oil in a frying pan and brown the eggplants on both sides, a few at a time. Add more oil as needed (the eggplants will absorb a lot of oil).
Drain eggplant slices on paper towels. (Low-fat alternative: Place eggplant slices on baking sheets and brush with oil. Bake in the oven at 350°F for approximately 20–30 minutes until brown but not crisp, turning the eggplant halfway.)
Now prepare the stuffing. Mix together the meat, onion, salt, and pepper.
Form into small sausage shapes, about ⅔–1-inch thick and 2 inches long.
Place stuffing at one end of an eggplant slice and roll up. Secure with a toothpick.

(*continued*)

Place rolls in a large baking dish; spread tomato slices and any remaining unstuffed eggplant slices on top.
Next prepare the sauce. Heat oil and sauté the chopped onions until soft.
Stir in chopped tomatoes, tomato puree, stock, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and turmeric.
Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
Pour sauce over the rolls in the baking dish, cover tightly with aluminum foil, and bake for 1 hour at 350°F.
Serve hot with rice.

Rice and Eggplant Casserole (Chalabis Re'id Magloube)

Eggplants grow well in the desert climate and are considered the poor man's meat. This layered casserole, usually without or with very little meat, would be the main dish for many poor families.

1 cup long-grain rice
2 cups water
2 eggplants, trimmed and sliced crosswise about ½-inch thick
salt as needed
½ cup oil
2 onions, sliced thinly
½ pound lamb (turkey, chicken, or beef) cubed or ground (omit for vegetarian version)
½ cup tomato sauce or paste
1 cup water
1 cinnamon stick
2 cardamoms, whole

Clean, wash, and soak rice in water for 30 minutes. Drain and reserve until needed.
Meanwhile, lightly sprinkle salt on eggplant slices. After 20 minutes, rinse off the brown liquid, and pat dry with paper towels.
Heat half the oil in a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid. Sauté eggplants until light brown on both sides.
Remove, drain on paper towels and set aside.
In the same pan, sauté onions until soft (add about 1–2 tablespoons oil if needed). Remove and set aside. (There is no need to wash the pan in between sautéing the different ingredients.)
Add the remaining oil and sauté the meat until it has changed color. Remove and set aside.
Simmer together the tomato sauce, water, salt, cinnamon, and cardamoms for 10 minutes.
Add rice and simmer for 10 more minutes (the rice will not be completely cooked).
Remove and set aside.
Now for final assembly: arrange a layer of eggplants at the bottom of the saucepan. Next lay the onions, then the lamb. Finally pour over all the tomato and rice mixture.
Cover and gently simmer on very low heat for 30 minutes. Let rest for 10 minutes before serving.

To serve: with a knife, cut through the casserole, and make sure each portion has all the layers.

Semolina and Syrup Dessert (Ma'mounia)

This dessert was first recorded in an Arabic cookbook in the ninth century, though it may well be much older.

3 cups water
1 cup sugar
1 tsp lemon juice
½ cup sweet butter
1 cup semolina
½ cup cream
1 tsp ground cinnamon

Make the syrup: bring to a boil the water, sugar, and lemon juice. Reduce heat and simmer for about 10 minutes more until slightly thickened.
In another saucepan, melt butter and add semolina. Stir until semolina is lightly fried, then add the syrup. Let mixture simmer for about 3 minutes, stirring constantly.
Remove from heat and let cool for about 20 minutes.
Spoon *ma'mounia* into individual serving bowls, top with cream (unwhipped), and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Cardamom Cookies (Hajji Badah)

Iraqis love sweets and these cookies are eaten as snacks at any time of the day.

2 cups flour
1 tsp ground cardamom
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp baking powder
1⅓ cups sugar
4 large eggs
2 cups ground almonds
½ TBS rosewater
6 dozen whole skinned hazelnuts, pistachios, or almonds

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease several large baking sheets.
Sift together flour, cardamom, salt, and baking powder.
Beat the sugar and eggs until light and creamy. Stir in the flour mixture, then the ground almonds.
With hands moistened with rosewater, form the dough into 1-inch balls. (Add more ground almonds or flour if too soft to shape.)
Place balls on the prepared baking sheets and press to flatten slightly. Press a whole almond into the center of each cookie.
Bake until just lightly golden, for about 10–15 minutes.
Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool.
Store in an airtight container.

IRELAND (EIRE)

An island in the Atlantic, west of Britain, Ireland is about the size of West Virginia. The climate here is cool and very damp with high annual rainfall. The topography is mainly rolling hills, with a few rugged mountains, and plenty of tarns and lakes.

Ireland was conquered by the English in the fifteenth century and was a part of the British empire until it regained independence (except for six northern counties which elected to remain in Britain) in the twentieth century under the name "Eire."

Irish cooking has many commonalities with that of neighboring Britain: based on meat and potatoes and flavored mildly with a few herbs.

Foodstuffs

- Potatoes, cabbage and other greens, and pork are the basics of Irish food. Potatoes were so important to the Irish diet that a blight in the early mid-nineteenth century caused a massive famine.
- Favored meats are pork and beef.
- Milk products, including notably milk, butter, and cheese.
- Fish (cod, mackerel, skate, herring) and a variety of seafood (shrimp and prawns, oysters, mussels), both farmed and wild.

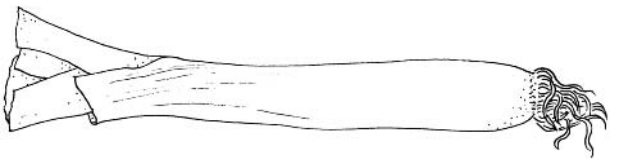
Typical Dishes

- Boiled or simmered cabbage with some flavoring (bacon, lard, fried onions).
- Cooked potatoes and cabbage.
- Fried or boiled eggs eaten with boiled potatoes.
- Sausages and chips are consumed by most people.
- Fish, notably herring and mackerel, often boiled, and eaten with boiled potatoes.
- Beer, milky tea, and a local brew called *poteen* (pronounced *po-cheen*).

Styles of Eating

- Settings are European standard, though they are often much less formal in the countryside.
- Breakfasts vary from extensive fry-ups of sausages, eggs, and fresh bread to simple slices of bread with jam or lard, washed down by milky tea.

- Lunch can be heavier or lighter, depending partly on the season and partly on the individual. They may include a soup or stew with bread.
- The main meal of the day is in the evening.
- Snacks include chips (French fries) and a variety of sweet cakes and cookies.



LEEK

Irish Stew

This makes a substantial main dish.

4–5 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
1½ pounds boneless stewing lamb (substitute beef or pork)
2 large onions, cut into eighths
2 fat stalks celery, sliced into 1-inch long pieces
2 turnips, cubed
salt and pepper to taste
1½ cups meat stock
3 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 bay leaf
3 TBS parsley, chopped

Alternately layer the ingredients in a buttered casserole or baking dish with a cover, beginning and ending with potatoes.
Season each layer well with salt and pepper.
Pour in the stock and add thyme or bay leaf. Cover with a piece of buttered foil, then the lid.
Bake in a slow oven, at 300°F for about 2 hours.
Discard thyme or bay leaf, sprinkle with parsley, and serve.

Boiled Smoked Pork and Cabbage

This dish is served very commonly among working-class people for a main meal. The original meat used is a large whole piece of bacon.

2½–3 pounds piece of smoked picnic shoulder, ham shank, or corned beef brisket
1 onion, peeled and studded with 6 whole cloves
1 clove garlic
1 bay leaf
8 peppercorns
water as needed
1 medium-sized cabbage, cut into quarters
butter, salt, and pepper to taste

Place the meat, onion, garlic, bay leaf, and peppercorns in a heavy saucepan. Add water just to cover and slowly bring to a boil.
Skim any scum that floats to the surface.

(*continued*)

Cover and simmer for 1½–2 hours or until tender. Remove meat and keep warm.
Bring the broth in the pan to a boil. Add cabbage and cook for about 15 minutes, or until tender but not mushy.
Remove the cabbage, drain, and season with butter, salt, and pepper.
Slice the meat into serving portions. Serve with cabbage, boiled potatoes, sharp mustard, or hot (not sweetened) prepared horseradish sauce (available at specialty shops).

Colcannon

This is a traditional dish for Halloween night. Serve with a meat main dish or sometimes on its own.

4 cups kale or cabbage, core and tough ribs removed, shredded (or half kale, half cabbage)
2 cups boiling salted water
2 small leeks, white parts only, chopped
½ cup half-and-half or milk
1 pound potatoes, peeled, quartered, boiled, and mashed
¼ tsp mace
salt and pepper to taste
4 TBS butter, melted

Boil kale in boiling salted water until tender but not too soft, about 5–8 minutes.
Drain and set aside.
In a saucepan, simmer leeks in half-and-half for about 10 minutes.
Add potatoes, mace, salt, and pepper, mixing well. Simmer until potatoes are heated through. Stir in reserved kale and mix thoroughly.
Remove from heat.
To serve: mound the mixture in a warm serving dish or four dishes. Press in to make a well in the center. Pour in butter and serve at once.

Cod Cobbler

Fish, including cod, are quite often baked or steamed. This would be an evening dish.

1½ pounds skinless fillets of cod
2 ounces butter
2 ounces flour
1 pint milk (plus extra for brushing over scones)
3½ ounces grated cheese
scones (recipe follows; or substitute 4 English muffins, split in half)

Preheat the oven to 350°F.
Place cod fillets in the bottom of a round or oval oven dish.

Over low heat, melt butter in a heavy saucepan, sprinkle flour over, and mix well until flour is golden.
Slowly add milk, stirring constantly and adding more only when the previous amount has been fully incorporated.
When sauce is fairly liquid, add rest of milk and stir.
Add cheese, stirring as little as possible. Allow cheese to melt.
Pour sauce over fish.
Cover the surface of the fish and sauce with scone dough rounds (or English muffins, crust side down).
Glaze them with a little milk, and sprinkle some more grated cheese over them.
Bake for about 20–25 minutes, or until the scones are golden brown.

Scones

8 ounces flour
2 tsp baking powder
pinch salt
2 ounces butter
2 ounces grated strong cheese (mature Cheddar)
1 egg yolk
¼ cup milk

Combine flour with baking powder and salt.
Rub butter into flour until mixture resembles coarse meal.
Mix in grated cheese, egg yolk, and enough milk to make a dough.
Knead lightly and briefly.
Roll dough out on floured surface ½-inch thick and cut into small rounds with a cookie cutter.

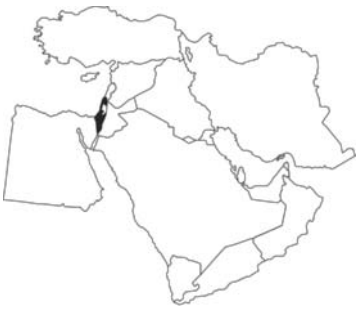
Potato Pie Dessert

Potatoes are so important in the Irish diet that they are also used for dessert.

¼ pound butter, melted
1 TBS grated almonds
1 tsp orange extract
¾ pound sugar
6 eggs, separated and beaten separately (yolks until lemon colored, the whites until stiff)
½ pound boiled potatoes, mashed

Line a buttered and floured cake pan with buttered wax paper.
Add almonds, orange extract, sugar, and egg yolks to potatoes. Mix thoroughly. Gently fold in egg whites.
Pour batter into pan. Bake at 375°F for 40–45 minutes until light brown.

ISRAEL



Israel is a small country on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. The climate is Mediterranean, with mild winters and hot summers, and the country raises a great variety of temperate, desert, and even tropical fruits and vegetables. Agricultural products and technologies are a major export item.

Majority of the population is Jewish, with substantial Muslim and Christian minorities. Much of the Jewish population are immigrants or children of immigrants from all over the world, so the cuisine tends to be eclectic, with strong Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and European overtones.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice, bread, pastas, and potatoes, depending on preference and on personal or parental origin.
- Most temperate and many tropical fruits, vegetables, and herbs are raised for local consumption and export.
- Fruit: common fruit such as citrus, tomatoes, Asian persimmons, avocados, bananas, cherries, apples, plums, pomegranates, grapes, olives; and some exotics such as dragon fruit and lychees.
- Vegetables: tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, cabbage, lettuce, radish. Both cooked and raw vegetables are a major item of diet.
- Chicken and turkey are the most common meats, due largely to the high prices of other meats. Grilled meat is extremely popular as it is in the rest of the Middle East. Pork is not supposed to be consumed by Jews or Muslims, but in practice nonreligious members of both religions do consume pork.
- Milk products: cheeses, many types copied from European hard-cheese originals, as well as soft white cheeses, yogurts, and sour milk of various types.

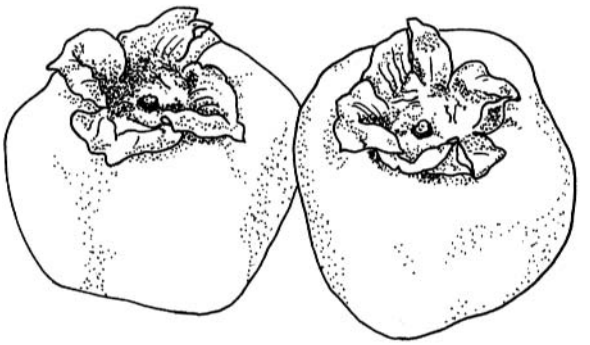
Typical Dishes

- Fresh salads and fresh fruit are extremely popular. Probably the favorite meal starter is *hummus* (chickpea paste) flavored with *tahina* (sesame seed sauce) and scooped with a pita (flat or pocket bread).
- Street foods, particularly *falafel* and *shawarma* (Turkish-style grilled meats) in pocket breads are extremely popular snacks.

- All three major religions have special foods for their main holidays. Virtually all Jewish holidays have ritually required foods. Id-al-Fitr for Muslims requires roast meat, as does Easter for Christians. Druze (a secretive offshoot of Shi'a Islam) eat special grain mixes and roasts during Nebi Shueib, their main festival.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Various styles of eating, due largely to different ethnic origins and current lifestyles. In the cities, European place settings with individuals eating from their own plates using fork, knife, and spoon are almost universal. Nomadic Bedouin Israelis and Ethiopian Israelis help themselves from a shared central dish.
- *Kibbutz* (collective settlement) members serve themselves cafeteria style from a wide variety of salads. Families tend to eat together (except in *kibbutzim*, where people tend to eat with their age-mates). The main meal is often at noon, particularly for those from a European background.
- Most meals include a fresh vegetable salad, and olives and pickles are almost always on the table.



PERSIMMON

- Separation between milk and meat required by Jewish ritual law means that in many Jewish households main meals (whether lunch or dinner) are based on meat, whereas all others are often milk-based, with cheeses and yogurts.
- Breakfast: fresh vegetables, eggs, bread or toast, olives, smoked or canned fish. Coffee or, more rarely, tea. Milk and juices.
- Lunch (for some, the main meal of the day; for others, a lighter meal): a salad and a main dish of meat, chicken, or fish with rice, potatoes, pasta, or bread. Fruit or a cooked dessert. Meals often end with coffee.
- Supper (for some, the main meal of the day; for others, a lighter meal): similar to breakfast, but possibly more elaborate.
- Snacks include both Middle Eastern pastries such as *baklava* (layers of *filo* pastry and nuts drenched in syrup) and *kataif* (cheese-stuffed vermicelli). Western pastries such as cheesecake and doughnuts are consumed with coffee. Fruit may be eaten at any time during the day.
- Coffee and, to a lesser extent, tea; beer and wines; orange juice and soft drinks are the most popular drinks.

Cucumber Salad (Salat Melafefonim)

Most meals in Israel include a salad of some sort, and arguments about how to make the perfect salad are commonplace.

4 small cucumbers (about 5 inches), washed and sliced thin
1 onion, sliced thin
⅛ cup sugar
½ cup water
1 cup white vinegar
½ TBS fresh dill

Combine cucumbers and onion.
Boil sugar, water, vinegar, and dill.
Cool.
Pour over salad, stir well, and chill.

Jerusalem-Style Mixed Grill (Meorav Yerushalmi)

This is a specialty of Jewish Jerusalem. It emerged as a street delicacy about 30 years ago.

3 TBS oil
1 medium onion, finely sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
½ pound chicken innards: hearts, spleen, liver
½ pound chicken breast cut into bite-sized pieces
½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp cumin powder
½ tsp coriander powder
salt and black pepper to taste
Finely sliced fresh vegetables of your choice (tomatoes, sweet peppers, cucumbers) for garnish
Finely sliced mixed pickles of your choice (cucumbers, sauerkraut, pickled peppers, radishes, carrots) for garnish
1 TBS *tahina* sauce per person
1 good pita bread per person, top slit to make a pocket, and kept warm

In a heavy skillet, heat oil and stir-fry the onions until translucent.
Add garlic and stir-fry for 30 seconds.
Add innards and cook, stirring constantly, about 5 minutes.
Add all spices and condiments and mix well.
Add breast meat, and cook while stirring until meat is done, for about 5 more minutes.
Remove from heat.
Place a helping of meat inside the pita pocket. Add vegetables of choice, and pickles. Pour *tahina* sauce on top.
Eat warm.

Chicken with Jerusalem Artichokes (Of Bekharshaf Yerushalmi)

Though "Jerusalem" artichokes have nothing to do with the city (the word is a corruption of the Italian *girassole*, meaning sunflower), these tubers are very popular throughout the country.

½ cup lemon juice
¼ cup olive oil
10 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
1 chicken, cut into serving pieces
½ pound Jerusalem artichokes, peeled and sliced into bite-sized chunks
10 saffron threads, soaked in 1 TBS water or, preferably, white wine for 5 minutes
water, as needed
salt and pepper to taste
a handful of fresh basil leaves
2 ounces pine nuts, toasted lightly

In a large heavy saucepan, mix lemon juice and olive oil.
Add the garlic halves, chicken, Jerusalem artichokes, and saffron.
Add water just to the tops of the chicken, cover, and bring to a boil over moderate heat.
Add seasoning and gently simmer for about 1 hour, or until chicken is tender.
Add basil, check seasoning, and remove from heat.
Garnish with pine nuts.
Serve with cooked rice.

Meat Baked in Sesame Sauce (Siniya)

This is a popular dish in most Arab-Israeli towns and villages.

1 pound ground meat (beef, turkey, chicken or lamb)
¾ tsp cumin powder
¾ tsp coriander powder
1 tsp chopped fresh mint
1 tsp fresh dill
½ cup parsley
2 TBS pine nuts
salt and pepper to taste
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup *tahina* (sesame sauce)
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 cup water

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Mix well the beef, cumin, coriander, mint, dill, parsley, pine nuts, salt, and pepper.
Set aside.
In a blender, add ¼ of the lemon juice to the raw *tahina* and mix well.
The sauce will thicken almost immediately, becoming almost like plaster, and its color will darken.
Gradually add more lemon juice, keeping the blender running constantly.
If thicker than the consistency of yogurt when the juice is all done, add water while beating. Add garlic.
Place a layer of the meat mixture in individual baking dishes, or shape the mixture into 4 large meat patties and place in a casserole or baking dish.
Pour prepared *tahina* over the meat.

(*continued*)

Bake until the meat is cooked and the surface is brown (about 30 minutes).
Baste the meat with the tahina sauce several times during baking.
Serve over rice.

"Binder" for Passover (Haroset)

This dish is an important ritual element during the Seder (Passover feast). It represents the mortar that the Hebrew slaves used for building in ancient Egypt. Contemporary Israeli Jewish traditions are mixed, so two of the many versions used in homes across the country are presented here.

Moroccan Haroset

1 cup pitted dates
1 cup walnut or pecan meats
grated coconut

Mince nuts and dates together in a manual meat grinder using a fine blade.
Form into small balls, about ¾ inch in diameter.
Roll in coconut.
Pile balls on a small serving plate.

European Haroset

1 dessert apple (sweet or tangy)
½ cup walnut or pecan meats
½ cup seedless raisins
1 TBS cinnamon
¼ cup sweet red wine

Quickly and roughly blend apples and nuts in a food processor
Blend in raisins, cinnamon, and enough wine for a sticky but firm consistency.
Mound on a serving dish or bowl.
Serve *haroset* on its own with *matza* (unleavened bread) or as relish with any savory dish.

Stuffed Eggplant (Hazilim Memula'im)

As in much of the Middle East, eggplants serve to replace meat in times of dearth. This dish may be served as the main dish or as a side dish in a meat meal.

2 medium eggplants
5 TBS oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
3 tomatoes, chopped
½ cup cooked rice
salt and pepper to taste
½ tsp cinnamon
chopped mint to taste
juice of 1 lemon

Cut eggplant in half lengthwise, leaving stalk intact, if wished. Scoop out pulp leaving a shell about ½-inch thick.
Prepare the stuffing: cube pulp roughly.
Heat oil in a heavy skillet. Fry onion until translucent. Add eggplant cubes. Cook until soft, about 8–10 minutes.
Remove from heat. Stir in tomatoes, rice, salt, pepper, cinnamon, and mint, and mix well.
To assemble: fill the eggplant shells with the stuffing.
Pour 2 TBS oil into a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid and place the stuffed eggplants.
Cook on the lowest heat possible until the shells are soft, about 30–40 minutes. Alternatively, place in a greased baking dish with 2 TBS oil, cover tightly with foil, and bake in a preheated 325°F oven for about 45–60 minutes.
Remove from heat and drizzle with lemon juice.
Allow to rest for about 10 minutes and serve.

Fruit Soup (Marak Perot)

This dish is eaten as dessert. It betrays its Eastern European origin but has been modified in Israel to use local fruit.

1 cup sour red cherries, pitted, halved
1 cup firm peaches, peeled, pitted, and sliced
1 cup plums, peeled, pitted, and cubed small
1 cup cooking apples, grated
1 cup sugar
6 cups water
1 tsp lemon juice
1 cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
¼ tsp salt
1½ TBS cornstarch mixed in 3 TBS water (optional)
1 cup sour cream (optional)
fresh sweet cherries, pitted, for garnish

Combine fruit, sugar, water, lemon juice, spices, and salt.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer gently for 20 minutes until fruits are tender.
Discard cinnamon and cloves.
Blend mixture roughly in a food processor so that there are plenty of chunky bits (alternatively, leave fruits whole).
For a thicker consistency, mix cornstarch and water and stir into the fruit soup.
Reheat and cook, stirring until slightly thickened.
Chill thoroughly. Adjust taste with lemon juice or sugar.
Serve in chilled compote glasses with dollops of sour cream topped with a cherry.

ITALY

Italy, in southern Europe, was settled by Greeks, Etruscans, Celts, Romans, and Byzantines, and comprised city-states fought over by Spain and France until unification in 1871. A varied climate enables a range of crops to be grown, particularly in the fertile Po River Valley, despite the predominantly mountainous terrain.

The history of cuisine in Italy goes back to the Roman age. Some of the earliest cookbook writers, for example Apicius, came from Rome. A lengthy imperial and colonial history means that Rome, and subsequently Italy, developed a complex and rich cuisine, some of it retained even through the Dark Ages after the fall of the Roman Empire. Italian cuisine has influenced French cuisine early in the latter's development.

Italian cooking is far more varied than the pizza-spaghetti-osso bucco that many tend to think of. The topography has isolated certain regions but has also created distinctive cuisines: Roman, Tuscan, Apulian, Venetian, and many more. In the south (south of Rome, that is), sauces and cooking are more Mediterranean style, with olive oil and tomatoes predominating. In the north, there is greater influence from neighboring French cuisines, and butter and rice are major constituents. In Emiglia-Romana, renowned as the gastronomic center of Italy, dishes are cooked with pork fat (lard), or all three (olive oil, butter, and lard in its major city, Bologna). Other regions are also influenced by neighboring German or Austrian elements. Various pastas, sauces, wines, and specialties based on local produce characterize each region.

Foodstuffs

- Generally speaking, Italian foodstuffs consist of Mediterranean products, and there is a noted preference for only the freshest ingredients to be used.
- Staples include cornmeal (in the south), rice (in the north), and many local forms of wheat pasta in all areas, predominantly flat, ribbon shapes in the north, and tubular ones in the south.
- Favorite meats are beef (particularly veal) and pork. All parts of the animal are used. Much meat goes into the preparation of salted hams (the prosciutto of Parma is world famous) and sausages (*salame* and *luganeghe*) of various sorts and other preserved meats (such as *pancetta* or bacon). Chicken, duck, squab, and other birds are eaten as well.

- Fish and seafood are in great demand. Mediterranean fish such as mullet, grouper, and tuna, and sardines are eaten fresh. Octopus, squid, shrimp, and a variety of shellfish are often eaten as antipasto (starters).
- Fruit include citrus fruit, melons and watermelons, apples, pears and peaches, strawberries and figs. Grapes are also eaten as well as used for preparing the many wines and liqueurs that Italy is famous for. Olives are grown throughout Italy, some for pickling, others for making olive oil.
- Vegetables include tomatoes (fresh and dried), potatoes, lettuce, arugula, and other greens, beans (signature foods in Tuscan cuisine), squashes such as zucchini, artichokes, onions, and garlic.
- Milk products include creams and particularly a great variety of both soft cheeses such as *mozzarella* (from buffalo milk), ricotta, provolone, veined gorgonzola, and *mascarpone*, to hard ones (generically called *grana* from their grainy texture, such as *pecorino* from sheep's milk and Parma's famous parmesan (*parmigiano*).

Typical Dishes

- Pizza, originating from Southern Italy, is the most widespread food in the world. The original pizza *Napolitana* (created to celebrate the visit of the Italian queen to Naples), is a simple dish of baked dough topped with basil, tomatoes, and *mozzarella di buffala* cheese, the colors representing the Italian flag.
- Pasta, dough made from hard durum wheat in various shapes, is a classic dish served as a first course. Different areas have their own preferred shapes, and new shapes such as *radiatori* are created from time to time. Pasta is served as a separate course with various sauces, ranging from plain butter and cream in the north to seafood in the south.
- Rice features in many northern dishes, where *risotto*—rice cooked while stirring in wine and simmering stock a cupful at a time—is a common main dish or first course.
- A variety of soups are prepared regionally, including the famous *zuppa di fagioli* (bean soup) from Tuscany, Rome's egg and cheese soup (*stracciatella*), and Ravenna's fish chowder (*brodetto*).
- Italian bakers make a wide variety of pastries and breads, and most areas have their special breads. Some of these, such as those on the island of Tuscany, are filled with ham or cheeses, while others are plain. Cakes and cookies are made throughout the country, ranging from simple sugared almond cookies in Sicily to elaborate sponge cake, sugar, and coffee creations in Venice, in particular *tiramisu*, its most famous dessert.
- In the northwest, typical dishes are rich in butter and cream or cheese, the products of a flourishing dairy and cattle industry, such as Lombardy's chicken in cream (*penne pollo e crema)* or polenta with butter and cheese (*polenta taragna*); the Piedmont's famed white truffles in a fondue of local Fontina cheese (*fonduta con tartufi bianchi*) or little dumplings layered with Fontina cheese and topped with butter (*gnocchi alla bava*); and Milan's signature dish of risotto with saffron, Parmesan, white wine, and butter (*risotto milanese*), often accompanied by wine-braised veal knuckles (*osso bucco*), another regional specialty. Seafood and fish are the specialties of the Ligurian coast, in particular Genoa's fish stew (*burrida*), as well as an Easter pie of ricotta, eggs, and spinach (*torta pasqualina*).

- Northeast Italy's Emiglia-Romana region is renowned for its rich cuisine (often compared to France's Burgundy) derived from its quality beef and dairy products, vegetables, and wheat. The most world renowned of its dishes is its spaghetti sauce (*ragú bolognese*) that accompanies local pasta *tagliatelle*, meat- or cheese-stuffed *tortellini*, or baked *lasagne*. Quality veal is rolled around a stuffing of liver, local Parma ham, and onions (*involtini alla cacciatora*). Typical Venetian dishes are thinly sliced calf's liver with onions (*fegato alla veneziana*) and salt cod dishes. The Austrian influence is evident in the Trentino region's typical dishes of sauerkraut, apple strudel, goulash, and rye bread.
- Rome, at the center of Italy, integrates the cooking of north and south, but also has its own specialties: whole roast suckling pig (*porchetta*) stuffed with herbs; cannelloni; egg ribbon pasta with butter and cheese (*fettucine al burro*); and deep-fried young artichokes (*carciofi alla giudea)*, originally from Rome's Jewish ghetto.
- Besides pizza and pasta from its wheat, Southern Italy's specialties feature seafood from its coast in spaghetti with clams (*vermicelli alla vongole*) and eggplants with Parmesan cheese (*melanzane alla parmigiana*). Sicily's *cuscusu* (fish soup with semolina) dates back to historical Arabic influence, and Sardinia's meat pies (*impanadas*) and bean soup (*fabbada*) reveal a Spanish origin.
- There are a wide variety of drinks. Wine (many regional varieties, including sparkling wine) and mineral water are commonly consumed by all during main meals (children receive highly diluted wine from an early age during family meals). Beer is also popular. Coffee is drunk in great quantities and in various forms by most adults during the day. Tea is sometimes drunk, usually cold during the summer. Aperitifs, flavored with wormwood (vermouth) or citrus (*limoncello)*, and distilled grape must to drink after dinner (*grappa*), are also popular.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and many short stops for tiny cups of coffee are the norm throughout Italy.
- Families generally eat together, or at least on weekends. Street foods are popular as well.
- Breakfast: fresh bread or rolls, butter, and large cups of milky coffee.
- Mid-morning: *panini*, or pastries of some kind, together with a cup or two of espresso or some other coffee.
- A classic Italian meal consists of an *antipasto*, small plates of fresh or preserved fish or meat or vegetables, often tangy, to stimulate appetite; a *pasta* with some light sauce or soup (*minestra,* possibly a *minestrone* with noodles); one or two main dishes (*piatti*) of meat, poultry, or fish; and a cooked vegetable or salad of various fresh vegetables. This is washed down by wine and mineral water. Most meals end with a simple dessert of ice cream or sherbet, or, more commonly, cheese and fruit, then a cup of coffee. This may be eaten at lunch but also likely in the evening.
- Afternoon: a pastry and coffee.
- Evening meal: usually a lighter, simpler meal than lunch.
- Large and small cafes serve various styles of coffee and many kinds of pastry during all hours of the day and in the evening.

Marinated Zucchini (Concia)

This is a popular antipasto created in the ancient Jewish community of Rome to whet the appetite.

4 medium zucchini
¼ cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 sprig basil, shredded
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS wine vinegar

Trim the ends of the zucchini.
Cut each in half crosswise, then thinly slice the halves lengthwise.
Dry the slices on paper towel overnight or for several hours.
Heat oil in a heavy skillet until hazy.
Fry slices a few at a time in a single layer until golden. Drain.
Arrange in layers in a deep glass container, seasoning each layer with small amounts of garlic, basil, salt, pepper, and a sprinkle of vinegar.
Cover container and store in the refrigerator for 2–3 hours.
Serve as antipasto.

Tuscan Bean Soup (Zuppa Fagioli a la Toscana)

Tuscany is famous for its bean dishes, spinach, and the many bay hedges that adorn the countryside and cities and whose leaves flavor its food.

2 pounds white kidney beans (or 3 cans cooked kidney beans, drained)
4 ounces very lean bacon, diced fine
¼ cup olive oil
½ cup red onion, chopped fine
½ cup celery, chopped fine
1 tsp fresh sage
1 tsp salt
1 tsp white pepper
4 cups chicken stock
1½ cups penne pasta
1 TBS parsley, finely minced
freshly grated Romano or Parmegiano cheese

Pour boiling water over dried beans and allow to soak overnight. Omit if using canned beans. Drain before cooking.
Heat oil and sauté bacon until soft.
Add onion and celery and sauté, stirring, for about 5 minutes.
Add sage, salt, and pepper.
Add chicken stock, cover and bring to a boil.
Add beans, cover and simmer until beans are soft (if using canned beans, simmer for 30 minutes).
Boil a large pot of fresh water, lightly salted. Add pasta, stir once. Bring water to rolling boil again.
Boil uncovered until noodles are *al dente* (chewy but cooked throughout).

(*continued*)

Drain and add to soup. Remove from heat.
Stir in minced parsley.
Serve immediately with grated cheese for sprinkling.

Fettuccine with Butter and Cream (Fettuccine al Burro)

This is a pasta recipe from northern Italy.

1 pound fresh fettuccine noodles
¼ cup butter
1 cup cream
salt and white pepper to taste
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Boil a large pot of fresh water, lightly salted. Add noodles. Stir once. Bring water to rolling boil again. Boil uncovered until noodles are *al dente* (chewy but cooked throughout).
In the meantime, melt butter in a large skillet until it foams. Add cream. Simmer over medium heat for 2 minutes until slightly thickened.
Season.
Remove noodles from water and drain well. Add noodles to cream.
Add ¼ cup Parmesan cheese.
Toss noodles and sauce quickly over medium heat until sauce coats noodles.
Serve immediately with additional Parmesan cheese.

Basic Corn Mush (Polenta)

Polenta is the staple of southern Italy.

5 cups water
1 tsp salt
1½ cups cornmeal

Bring water to a boil in a large, heavy pot. Add salt and reduce heat.
Add cornmeal to water very slowly, streaming from ladle or your hand. Stir quickly with a wooden spoon while adding cornmeal.
If necessary, stop adding cornmeal from time to time and beat mixture vigorously.
Cook, stirring constantly, for 20–30 minutes.
Polenta is done when it comes away cleanly from the sides of the pot.
Pour onto a large platter.
Wet your hands and smooth out about 2 inches thick.
Cool until it solidifies.
Cut into slices, put in each plate, and pour over sauce of your choice or eat with a meat dish.

Seasoned Cutlets (Piccata)

This is often served as a main dish.

1 cup flour
salt and white pepper to taste
4 cutlets (turkey or chicken breast, boneless lean veal, or pork)
6 TBS butter
juice of 1 lemon, sieved
3 TBS parsley, minced fine

Season flour with salt and pepper, and dredge cutlets with the mixture.
Heat butter in a large, heavy frying pan.
Gently cook the cutlets without crowding, turning over once, until done. Drain on paper towels and keep warm while the rest are cooking.
Add 1 tablespoon butter and lemon juice to the hot pan.
Increase heat to reduce the liquid, stirring constantly. Correct the seasoning.
Pour butter and lemon sauce over the cutlets.
Serve garnished with parsley.

Deviled Chicken (Pollo alla Diavola)

This is served as a main dish.

1 (2 pounds) whole chicken, quartered (or 4 chicken quarters)
½ cup olive oil
2 TBS hot pepper sauce of your choice or 1 tsp dried chili pepper flakes
juice of 2 lemons
1 TBS black pepper
1 tsp salt

Place chicken cut side down in roasting pan.
Mix remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Pour over chicken and and marinate for 2 hours.
Grill on a medium hot charcoal barbecue (or under a grill), skin side to heat, for 25 minutes.
Turn and cook for another 20 minutes until the juices run clear.
Baste continuously with remaining marinade.

Coffee Ice Cream (Gelato di Caffe)

The form of ice cream we eat today was invented in Italy, and Italian ice creams have a worldwide reputation.

⅓ cup sugar
2 egg yolks
½ cup milk, at room temperature
a pinch of salt
4 TBS instant coffee powder
1 cup whipping cream, chilled

Beat sugar and egg yolks together until lemon yellow and very thick.
Slowly add milk, beating gently.
Stir in salt. Transfer the mixture to the top of a double boiler over, not in, boiling water. Stir continuously for 10 minutes until custard is thick enough to coat the spoon.
Remove top of double boiler and set in a large bowl of ice water.
Keep stirring for 2 minutes to avoid lumps.
Transfer to a bowl and add coffee, stirring well.
Cover and set in refrigerator to chill thoroughly.
Whip cream into soft peaks and stir into coffee custard.
Place bowl in freezer (or ice cream maker). Whisk custard every 5 minutes to break up ice. Serve when it reaches right consistency (or use ice cream machine according to directions).

Iced Tea (Té con Granita)

A very popular drink during summer in southern Italy.

2 good tea bags
1 cup boiling water
sugar to taste
3 cups cold water
4 TBS lemon or orange sherbet, or 2 popsicles, crushed in bowl
juice of 1 lemon
4 drops vanilla extract (optional)

Steep tea bags in freshly boiled water to make a strong tea (remove before tea becomes bitter and tannin floats to surface).
Add sugar and stir to dissolve.
Mix hot tea into cold water (*not* the reverse).
Add lemon juice and vanilla, if desired. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
To serve, place equivalent amounts of sherbet/popsicle in 4 glasses.
Pour in tea and serve.

JAMAICA

Jamaica, the third largest Caribbean island, was first settled by Spain, then colonized by Britain in 1655. It eventually gained independence in 1962, though still remains within the British Commonwealth. Sugar has traditionally been Jamaica's major crop, with African, East Indian, and Chinese laborers brought in to the plantations. Jamaica's hot and humid climate in the coastal plains is ideal for bananas and other tropical crops, the temperate interior mountains are ideal for coffee, and the coasts yield fish and seafood. Jamaican food is spicy and reflects its mixed culture with African, Caribbean, East Indian, British, and Chinese influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, cornmeal, beans, cassava, plantain.
- Vegetables: yam, *callaloo* (leaves of *Amaranthus viridis*, also known as Chinese spinach or Indian kale, and different from *callaloo* in the eastern Caribbean, which refers to leaves of taro tubers), pumpkin, sweet potatoes, okra, cabbage, sweet and hot peppers, christophene (called *cho-cho*), avocado, breadfruit.
- Fruit: citrus, mango, pineapple, guava, star apple, jackfruit (related to breadfruit but larger and aromatic), June or Spanish plum, naseberry (a small, brown, heart-shaped fruit tasting like cinnamon), unusual "Tinkin Toe" (also called "Stinking Toe"), an oblong-shaped fruit with very sweet flesh.
- Goat, chicken, preserved meats (salt pork, corned beef), fish, shrimp, conch, crab, lobster.
- Seasonings: allspice, Scotch bonnet hot peppers, curry spices (from the East Indian legacy), thyme, nutmeg, mace, jerk (a spice and herb blend; see recipe below), fresh ginger, star anise (from the Chinese influence).

Typical Dishes

- Ackee and salt fish is the national dish, usually eaten at breakfast. Ackee, the fruit of a West African tree, is poisonous until ripe. Its yellow flesh has a nutty, delicate flavor like avocado, and is used as a vegetable (see box "Poisonous Foods"). Salt fish is usually salted cod.
- Escovitch fish: fried fish marinated in vinegar, spices, and vegetables.
- Jerked chicken or pork, curried chicken, souse (pickled pig's trotters), cowfoot soup.

POISONOUS FOODS

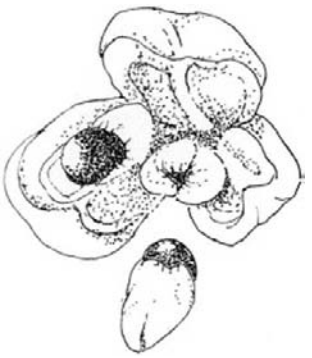
A number of foods that humans eat are poisonous in their natural state and require careful handling or processing to be made edible. The three most prominent poisonous foods are *akee*, cassava, and *fugu*. *Akee* is the fruit of a tree (*Blighia sapida*) originating in Africa and now common in the Caribbean. The aril (fleshy pulp around the seeds) is edible when the fruit is ripe and has split naturally. Unripe and overripe fruit are both poisonous, as is all the fruit except the aril.

Cassava, a bush originating in tropical South America produces cyanogenic glucosides in the edible tubers, which, in some species, needs to be removed before the richly nutritious root can be consumed.

Fugu, one of several species of the puffer fish (*Tetraodontidae* sp.) are eaten in Japan and some other Pacific islands. An algae resident in the fish's tissues, and particularly concentrated in the liver, produces tetrodotoxin, one of the deadliest poisons. Nontheless, the flesh of the *fugu* is esteemed as a delicacy. Only specially experienced and licensed cooks are allowed to prepare and serve *fugu* in Japan.

How these various poisonous foods came to be eaten is something of a puzzle. The answer may lie partly in the variation in poison concentrate in specific specimens (which means that some people who ate these foods survived to tell how good the foods tasted) and partly in the inherent human desire for exotic and interesting things to eat.

- Curried goat (called "curry goat"), mannish water (goat soup), for special occasions such as Sunday dinner, birthdays, and anniversaries.
- Rice and peas (usually kidney beans or, less often, gungo peas).
- Pan-fried breads: bakes (actually fried), *bammies* (made of grated cassava), johnnycakes, coconut bake, hot pepper bread (sweet and spicy).
- Snacks: fresh tropical fruits, roasted corn on the cob, pan-fried breads, meat pies (patties).
- Sweets: tropical fruit ice creams (mango, soursop).
- Drinks: sky juice (shaved ice with flavored syrup), suck suck (cold, fresh coconut juice, called "jelly" coconut because of the soft interior meat), exotic fruit juices (tamarind, soursop, strawberry, and cucumber), ginger beer, limeade, local bottled soft drinks (carbonated grapefruit). Blue Mountain coffee, the world's most expensive coffee, is grown here and widely drunk. Rum and beer are also locally brewed.



ACKEE

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast is substantial, with fresh fruits, bully beef, and johnnycakes (spicy corned beef hash and fried biscuits); cornmeal porridge with fried or boiled plantains. On weekends, goat's liver fried with onions, served with bammies or boiled dumplings and yam. Coffee, hot malted milk drinks (Milo, Horlicks), or chocolate to drink.
- Lunch is similar to dinner but lighter: fried chicken or grilled fish with baked sweet potato or yam, boiled breadfruit or dumplings.

- Dinner is the heaviest meal and consists of three courses: jerked, curried, or stewed chicken or shrimp, stewed pork or peas, served with rice and peas, or pan-fried breads or baked sweet potato; salad (potato salad or fancy coleslaw with pineapple and coconut); dessert of fresh fruits or ice cream. Sunday meals are extra special, featuring drinks such as sorrel (in season), carrot, or beet juice.
- Take-out meals ("buy and bring home") at dinner once a week, usually Friday: jerked chicken, pork, or sausage; fried chicken; pizza; fried fish and festival (sweet cornmeal fritters); roast fish and yam.

Festival

These deep-fried cornmeal fritters, often sold at street stalls, are usually eaten with fried fish or jerked meats as snacks.

1 cup flour
1 cup yellow cornmeal
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp cinnamon
a pinch of salt
1 TBS sugar
½ cup salted butter
¼ tsp almond extract
½ tsp vanilla extract
⅔–1 cup whole milk
vegetable oil for deep-frying

In a mixing bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, and sugar.
Rub the butter well into the flour mixture.
Add flavorings and just enough milk to flour the mixture to make a stiff dough.
Knead lightly and divide into twelve portions.
Form into small, flattened cigars.
In a deep skillet or heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat enough vegetable oil for deep-frying to 350°F.
Fry just a few festivals at a time until golden brown. Drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil. Serve hot.

Corned Beef Scotch Eggs

This Jamaican version of a Scottish favorite originates, no doubt, from the managers of traditional sugar plantations, many of whom were from Scotland. The use of corned beef, salt pork, and salted cod was from historical necessity, because before refrigeration, it was difficult to keep fresh food from spoiling. As well, beef and cod are not local Jamaican ingredients; being imported from the United States and northern Europe. Even with modern refrigeration and transportation, however, these preserved items remain popular, as their flavor and texture now form an essential element of traditional Jamaican taste.

Serve this dish with coleslaw (the Jamaican version features pineapple slices and shredded fresh coconut) or a tossed vegetable salad with pan-fried bread as a light dish for lunch or as a snack.

12 ounces corned beef
3 stalks spring onions, chopped fine
3 stalks fresh thyme or parsley, chopped fine
½ tsp black pepper
1 beaten egg
4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled
1 cup bread crumbs
flour for dusting
oil to deep-fat fry (or bake in oven)

Mix the corned beef well with herbs, black pepper, and beaten egg.
Divide into four portions.
Dust your hands with flour and place one portion of the corned beef mixture on your palm to make a patty.
Place 1 hard-boiled egg in the center of the patty, and stretch the patty to cover the egg completely.
Dip in bread crumbs, lay on a plate, and chill until ready to fry.
In a deep skillet, heat enough oil for deep-frying to 350°F.
Fry the Scotch eggs until golden brown.
Cut across the middle of each Scotch egg and serve at once.

Jamaica Ginger and Apple Drink

Apples are not locally grown in Jamaica, so this is one imaginative way of making apple juice at home. Another popular homemade drink in Jamaica that features ginger is ginger beer, which, contrary to its name, is not a true beer.

10 cups water
1 cup granulated sugar
6 apples, washed, cored, and diced
1 cup grated fresh ginger

In a large stainless steel pan, bring water and sugar to a boil.
Add apples and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the apples are tender.
Add ginger.
Set aside to cool.
Strain through a fine sieve or a cheesecloth.

Jerk Burger

Jerk seasoning, said to have been introduced by the Maroons (who were escaped black slaves) to preserve their food, has become very popular not only in Jamaica and the Caribbean but also worldwide. The Jamaican method of jerking is to slowly grill the well-marinated meat (chicken, pork, sometimes fish or sausages) over coals from allspice wood, covering the entire grill with metal sheets, which at the same time keeps the smoke in, imparts a smoky flavor to the meat, and preserves its moistness. This variation teams up with a U.S. import—the

burger—which has become a popular snack. Serve this with festivals and potato salad (another familiar food, but which may have sweet potatoes together with regular potatoes in the Jamaican version).

2 TBS butter
1 onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup fresh mushrooms, chopped
1½ pounds ground beef
½ pound ground fatty pork
1 tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
jerk seasoning
parsley
young spinach leaves or lettuce leaves
mustard
8 red onion rings

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat and sauté onion and garlic until soft, for about 3 minutes.
Stir in mushrooms, quickly frying until mushrooms have absorbed the butter, for about 3 minutes.
Place the mushroom mixture in a large bowl, using a rubber scraper to get all the pan juices.
Add meat, jerk seasoning, parsley, salt, and pepper. Cover and let stand in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour or overnight.
Shape the burgers into four large or eight medium patties.
Grill or fry in a skillet over medium-high heat for 7–8 minutes on each side, or until done.
Serve on toasted crusty rolls with mustard, spinach or lettuce leaves, and red onion rings.

Jerk Seasoning

Jerk seasoning has many variations, but the traditional elements are allspice, thyme, hot pepper (preferably Jamaican Scotch bonnet), green onion, ginger, cinnamon, and black pepper. The freshness of the ingredients is key.

3 TBS oil
3 stalks green onions
3 stalks fresh thyme (leaves only)
1 Scotch bonnet or other hot pepper (optional)
½ tsp allspice berries or ground allspice
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground nutmeg
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp brown sugar
2 TBS malt or cane vinegar

In a blender or food processor, put the oil, then add the rest of the ingredients. Process to a puree.

Coffee Ice Cream

Rich ice cream flavored with Jamaica's fruits such as soursop or coconut is the most popular dessert. If you can get Blue Mountain coffee, that would make the perfect Jamaican flavor for this cream. If not, any strong and freshly brewed coffee will make just as good a result.

6 egg yolks
1 cup sugar
1 cup strong, freshly brewed coffee
2 cups double cream
1 TBS vanilla
1 TBS instant coffee

In a bowl, mix egg yolks and sugar till thick.
In a saucepan, mix coffee and cream and heat gently until bubbles form around the edge of the pan. Remove from heat and set aside.
Spoon, little by little, about a quarter of the coffee-cream mixture into the yolks, mixing well.
Pour the entire yolk and coffee mixture into the saucepan, to make a rich coffee custard, which is the basis of the ice cream.
Cook the custard at low heat, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, for about 15 minutes.
Take care not to overcook the custard as it will curdle.
Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and instant coffee. Set aside to cool. When the custard is completely cold, chill in the refrigerator for 3 hours or overnight.
Pour into an ice cream maker following manufacturer's instructions.
If you do not have an ice cream maker, freeze the mixture in a covered container for 2½ hours or until the edges have started to freeze.
With an electric hand mixer, beat the frozen custard for about 5 minutes.
Return to the freezer and keep for another 2–3 hours. Beat again. Then let freeze completely.

JAPAN

A mountainous island chain in East Asia, Japan is a constitutional monarchy and a major economic power. The four major islands and the thousands of smaller ones are largely volcanic, and there is limited agricultural area in the river valleys. The climate ranges from subarctic (long winters with plenty of snow) in Hokkaido to tropical in the Ryukyu Islands to the south.

Japan's agro technology enables high yields of cereals, fruit, vegetables, and livestock. Its fishing fleets range worldwide to supply the country's high demand for fresh fish and seafood, which are often consumed raw. Increased meat, poultry, and dairy consumption is satisfied by imports, mainly from the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

The population is predominantly Japanese, with minorities of Koreans, Chinese, and other Asians. Historically, Japan has been influenced by Korea and China, and since the past century by Europe and the United States. Many Japanese dishes are adaptations to local foods and recipes that originated from those places.

Japanese cuisine is sophisticated, emphasizing the freshness of ingredients and their artistic presentation. It is also highly inventive and adaptive, and many foreign foods are part of daily Japanese fare. Its prosperous urban population enjoy eating out at the wide range of eating venues that provide food fitting all budgets and tastes, from traditional Japanese, Chinese, Italian, and other ethnic cuisines, and east-west fusion to major international cuisines. Regional food varies and, though influenced by city trends, continues to maintain traditions (see box "East Asian Table Settings").

Foodstuffs

- The staple is rice, though younger people sometimes substitute bread.
- Buckwheat and wheat noodles, bean noodles; Western-style bread.
- Fish and seafood of all kinds, including jellyfish, sea cucumber, and sea squirt.
- Chicken, pork, and beef, much of it imported. For many, bean curd (*tofu*) substitutes for meat, as it has traditionally.
- Vegetables include seaweed of many kinds, which are cultivated in bays along the coast, giant radish (*daikon*), bamboo shoots, Chinese cabbage, spinach, eggplant, cultivated mushrooms, dried gourds, wild fungi, wild mountain vegetables (ferns), cucumbers, tomatoes.

- Fruit: Asian pear, apple, peach, melon, watermelon, loquat, grapes (Japanese cultivars—small-berried and giant-berried varieties), tangerines.
- Drinks: tea (both native green varieties and semi-smoked oolong from China), coffee, fruit juices, health drinks, fermented milk drinks, yogurt drinks.
- Seasonings: fermented soybean paste (*miso*), soy sauce, dried seaweed and dried bonito for cooking stock, trefoil (*mitsuba*), red and green *shiso* (*Perilla*), *sansho* (*Zanthozylum*).

Typical Dishes

- Fish and seafood dishes: *sashimi* (raw fish); *sushi* (vinegared rice and raw fish); salt-grilled fish; *tempura* (batter-coated fried seafood and vegetables).
- Soups and stews: *miso* soup; meat or poultry and vegetables.
- Table-cooked dishes: meat and vegetables simmered or grilled (Korean style) on a tabletop cooker.
- Rice dishes: curry and rice (*kare raisu*); rice and meat bowl (*donburi*); seafood or poultry rice soup (*zosui*); Chinese-style fried rice.
- Noodle dishes: fried noodles (*yakisoba*); Chinese-style soup noodles (*ramen*).
- Pickles: eggplant or gourd preserved in *miso* (soybean paste) or rice wine lees or soy sauce.
- Sweets: traditional Japanese rice cakes made with glutinous rice, Western-type cakes (especially cheese and chocolate), green tea–flavored cake (fusion of Japanese flavor and Western baking technique).

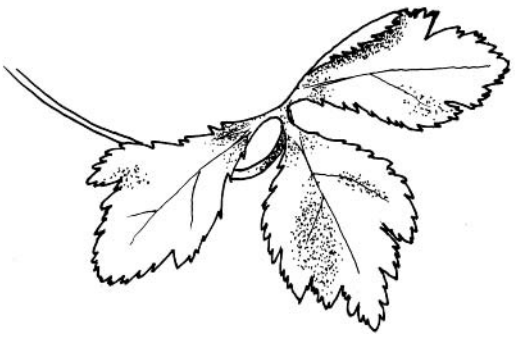
EAST ASIAN TABLE SETTINGS

Traditional table settings in East Asia are dependent on chopsticks, invented in China. The use of chopsticks is common in all Chinese-influenced societies as well (Japan, Korea, and to a lesser extent Vietnam and Thailand). Confucius claimed that the use of chopsticks inhibited men from fighting during meals, which seems to indicate that early Chinese ate with their belt knives and possibly spoons.

East Asian table settings consist of a pair of chopsticks, a bowl for the staple (normally rice today), bowls or dishes for other foods, and possibly a spoon. The precise use of these utensils varies from culture to culture and depends on the materials used. Chinese chopsticks tend to be long and cylindrical, of bamboo, ivory, wood, or, more recently, plastic. Japanese chopsticks tend to be of wood or bamboo and are shorter, with a taper toward the point. Korea, wood-poor, traditionally makes metal chopsticks. Bowls in China are traditionally ceramic; in Japan, a mix of lacquered wood and ceramics; and in Korea, metal.

Perhaps as a consequence, dining arrangements differ as well. In China, each place setting includes chopsticks, a ceramic spoon, a rice bowl and a dish for condiments/side dishes. The side dishes are placed in the center of the table for diners to help themselves (and, hopefully, not to let them take more than their fair share). Soup is drunk from a bowl with a spoon. Rice is eaten from the raised bowl with the aid of chopsticks. In Japan, each diner is provided with chopsticks, a soup bowl, and individual plates with side dishes. Soup is drunk directly from the bowl. In Korea, diners may have all food in front of them or there may be a central plate of side dishes for all to share. Diners eat with chopsticks in one hand and a spoon in the other. Hot metal bowls and plates are not moved from the table.

Styles of Eating



MITSUBA

- Three main meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: Western style, with toast, cooked egg, butter, coffee, fruit juice. Japanese style, with rice, seaweed, raw egg, fermented beans (*natto*), grilled fish, *miso* soup, green tea.
- Lunch: rice and meat bowl (*donburi*); curry rice (a mild, thick curry sauce with very little meat served over rice, eaten with Japanese-style pickles); Western-style pasta (spaghetti with seafood or meat sauce; *doria*, a casserole of rice and meat or seafood with cream sauce, topped with grilled cheese); traditional lunchbox-type meal (*obento*) of rice, pickles, and small servings of fish or meat and vegetables; fresh fruit for dessert.
- Dinner: usually rice, *miso* soup, pickles, and two to three side dishes of raw or grilled fish, stewed or fried meat dish, and steamed vegetable dish. Fresh fruit for dessert. Rarely sweet cake.
- Snacks: raw fruit or salty pickles with tea, sweet pastries with coffee, rice cakes, rice ball soup, pizza, spaghetti, noodles.

Rice Omelet (Omuraisu)

This dish, frequently made at home, is a favorite of children of all ages and a standard dish at small eateries and family restaurants for a light meal at anytime. This is usually served with a clear consommé-type soup strewn with chopped spring onions.

1 cup cooked rice per person
8 eggs, well beaten, lightly seasoned
8 TBS oil
salt to taste
tomato ketchup

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a frying pan.
Stir-fry rice for about 2 minutes, until all rice grains have separated and rice has been coated with oil.
Add 1 tablespoon ketchup, and cook stirring well until all rice is coated. Season with salt if necessary.
Remove from pan and mold into a long almond shape on a warmed plate.
Heat an additional 2 tablespoons oil in the pan until smoking.
Pour in 1 quarter of the eggs, tilting the pan to ensure maximum spread. Cook over medium heat until bottom is cooked. Turn omelet over (with practice, you can do this by gently tapping on the frying pan handle while it is tilted toward you).
When cooked, slide onto rice (if you have used the tapping method, you will have a thick omelet "sausage"; slit this gently lengthwise, about ½ inch the thickness through, and unfold the omelet to cover the rice mound).

(*continued*)

Garnish with a generous dollop of ketchup.
Repeat for the remaining rice and egg.
Serve hot.

Beef and Rice Bowl
(Gyūdon, *also* Gyūniku Donburi)

This is a very easy everyday dish, commonly offered in roadside diners and family restaurants and also made at home for a quick meal. While beef is not a traditional Japanese food ingredient (because of the Buddhist injunction against taking the lives of animals for food), for several decades now, beef and pork have become commonplace, and meat consumption has risen dramatically. This dish is eaten at midday or in the evening, accompanied by pickled vegetables and *miso* soup.

The thinner the meat, the faster it cooks, so if you cannot request a butcher to cut it thinly, buy a solid chunk of meat, freeze it for about 1 hour, and slice it against the grain, using a good, sharp knife.

4 servings hot, freshly cooked plain white rice, preferably short grain
3 TBS oil
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 pound thinly sliced strips of beef (round or London broil) or boneless pork, 3×1×⅛ inches
2–3 TBS Japanese-style soy sauce
2 TBS sugar, or to taste
½ cup beef stock or hot water
1 block firm tofu (optional), cut into 16 cubes
1 leek, white part only, thinly sliced diagonally

Warm four large, deep soup bowls by filling them up to two-thirds with very hot water. Let stand while you prepare the meat.
Heat a wok over medium heat.
Add oil; stir in onions and fry until softened, for about 2–3 minutes.
Increase heat to medium-hot.
Add beef, briskly stirring so that all pieces are seared; fry for about 1–2 minutes.
Stir in soy sauce, sugar, and stock; fry for about half a minute, mixing the sauce well with the meat.
Stir in tofu and leek. Let cook for about 1 minute or until thoroughly heated through. Turn off heat.
Quickly discard hot water and wipe the bowls dry.
Place roughly 1¼ cups hot rice into each bowl.
Distribute meat equally among the bowls, with an eye to neatness and appearance: make sure the meat, onions, and tofu are side by side (not obscured by another item) on the surface of the bowls.
Serve at once.

Cabbage Pickle (Kyabetsu no Tsukemono)

When rice is served in the home, pickles and *miso* soup are usually served with it. These three items in themselves constitute a complete meal and used to be all that most families ate in less prosperous times.

There are many types of pickles: each locality has its own specialty, and each family will make its own variation. While the remembered taste of mom's apple pie is what makes Americans yearn for home, in Japan it is the taste of home-made pickles.

There are long-term and quick pickles. The long-term ones are, as their name implies, intended to last for months, if not a year. The quick ones are ready in 2–3 hours or overnight. Most rural households used to make their own pickles, vital where winters are long and snow covers the ground until spring. Nowadays, very few bother to make their own for year-round use, but quick pickles are still being made.

1 small head Chinese cabbage, as fresh as possible, about 1 pound
water
salt
ice-cold water

Remove the leaves from cabbage, keeping them whole.
Fill a large pot two-thirds full with water. Add 1 tsp salt and bring to boil.
Add cabbage and blanch for 1 minute.
Transfer blanched cabbage to a large bowl half-filled with ice-cold water. Leave cabbage to chill.
Meanwhile, prepare pickling brine in the proportion of 1 cup water to 1 tsp salt. (Prepare about 16 cups initially; you may need to prepare more, depending on the size of the cabbage and the bowl. The cabbage must be completely submerged in the brine.)
Boil the pickling brine and let cool.
Drain the cabbage and place in layers in a large bowl.
Pour cooled brine over.
Place a clean plate above, and top with a heavy can to weigh the cabbage down so that all are completely covered by the brine. Cover all with foil or plastic wrap.
Set aside for 2–3 hours.
Drain leaves; stack 3–5 leaves on top of one another.
Cut into neat bite-size squares, leaving the stacks intact. Repeat until all the leaves have been cut, keeping the squares as uniform as possible.
For each diner, make up two stacks of pickled cabbage, each roughly 1½ inches in height.
In four small, shallow bowls (preferably with a dark glaze), lay the stacks on their side so that the layers face up.
Pass around some soy sauce for each diner to drizzle just a few drops over the pickles, if desired.

Savory Custard Soup (Chawan Mushi)

This is an unusual soup: although on top it looks like a solid custard, it is not sweet, and at the bottom, there is plenty of hot stock. This is usually served for an evening meal, especially in the winter. The ingredients given here are the most commonly used in Japan, but depending on the season or locale, other items can be substituted. Instead of shrimp, a small piece of fish fillet may be substituted, in which case omit the chicken breast. Or, instead of ginkgo nuts, use button mushrooms. Trefoil is a delicately aromatic herb; if not available, substitute three matchstick-size strips of lemon or lime rind, without the white, bitter part.

½ cup chicken breast, diced
1 tsp Japanese-style soy sauce
1 tsp sake or *mirin* (sweet cooking wine) (optional)
4 small raw shrimp, briefly blanched in hot water until they turn pink (about 30 seconds)
12 fresh ginkgo nuts, shelled and peeled (or substitute broad bean kernels, peeled, or 24 green peas)
12 stalks trefoil (or substitute watercress or flat-leaf parsley, chopped)
2½ cups *dashi* or good chicken stock, degreased
½ tsp salt
1 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS *mirin* or sake (or 1 tsp sugar)
4 eggs, lightly beaten until just mixed
4 ceramic cups (teacups are fine, even better if they have no handles)
foil or plastic wrap, 4 sheets large enough to cover cups

Marinate chicken in soy sauce and sake or *mirin* for 15–20 minutes. Drain and discard marinade.
Into the cups, place chicken, shrimp, and ginkgo nuts or substitutes.
To prepare custard, in a bowl, mix thoroughly *dashi* or stock with salt, soy sauce, and *mirin* or sugar.
Slowly add eggs, mixing well without raising bubbles.
Strain egg mixture carefully into cups, leaving a ½-inch clear space to the top.
Top with chopped greens; cover tightly with foil or plastic wrap.
Set cups in a steamer; steam over medium heat for 20 minutes.
Alternatively, arrange a grid inside a wok. Set cups on grid.
Pour hot water in wok well below the level of the grid and cups.
Cover wok and let water come to a gentle boil. Steam as directed above.
Serve at once.

Pearl Onions in Walnut Miso *Salad Dressing* (Kotamanegi no Kurumi Miso Ae)

This dressing comes from Yuzawa, Akita, in northern Japan. The original dish is made with tiny wild onions. This is served in individual small bowls as an accompaniment to meat or fish for an evening meal. Each serving is spooned into the middle of the bowl and left as a mound; the top of the salad should not be level.

3 cups small white onions
2 cups walnuts
2 TBS sugar, or to taste
2 TBS sake, or water
¼ cup *miso*
1 walnut half per diner, or a small watercress sprig, for garnish

Parboil the onions for 2–3 minutes. Depending on size, you may need to leave them longer. Take one, peel and taste; they should be cooked through but not mushy.
Quickly dip into cold water and drain thoroughly.
Peel the onions: the skins should slip off easily.
In a blender or food processor, blend the nuts with sugar until ground very fine.
Transfer nut mixture to a medium-sized bowl.
Mix in sake or water and *miso*; blend well to a thick paste. Check seasoning. Add more sugar to balance the saltiness of the *miso*, if desired.
Keep dressing and onions refrigerated until ready to serve.
One hour or preferably less before serving, blend dressing with peeled onions. (If mixed any earlier, moisture from the onions will seep through and spoil the appearance of the dish.)
Mound the salad in individual bowls; place the garnish just below the summit of the mound.

Grilled Skewered Chicken (Yakitori)

This is a very popular dish, often sold at outdoor kiosks during festivals, but also offered in restaurants specializing in grilled skewered meats and vegetables. Cook this for an outdoor barbecue, or, alternatively, cook under the grill indoors. This method of grilling the ingredients separately at first, before threading them through the skewers for the final grilling, ensures that every item is done just right. Take care not to overcook the chicken; it should retain its moistness. Serve as an appetizer with drinks, or as a side dish with rice, vegetables, and *miso* soup.

2 pounds chicken thighs, deboned, skin left on, sliced into 2-inch cubes
4 TBS soy sauce
4 TBS *mirin* (sweet rice liquor, available from Japanese stores), or 2 TBS sugar and 2 TBS water
2 leeks, white part only, sliced into 2-inch lengths
12 small green bell peppers, left whole, including stalk, or 2 large green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes
1 tsp sugar
bamboo skewers, soaked in water 1 hour before using
oil for greasing grill

Marinate chicken in soy sauce and *mirin* or sugar for 1 hour, turning several times to marinate evenly.

(*continued*)

Drain chicken; transfer to a bowl. Put marinade in a small pan, add sugar (if you are using *mirin*; omit if sugar has been used already) and boil till reduced by about half. Set aside.
Brush a grilling grid with oil; allow to heat up.
Place the leeks on the grid and grill at low medium heat until done, for about 3–5 minutes, turning them to cook evenly.
Next grill the peppers for about 1–3 minutes; these do not need to be turned.
Grill the chicken last of all, for about 3–4 minutes, turning them to cook evenly.
When the ingredients have cooled down a bit, thread them alternately on skewers: green pepper first, then chicken, then leek. Allow 2–3 skewers per person.
Brush the skewered items with the cooked marinade.
Grill for 1–3 minutes, or until heated through. Do not be alarmed if the chicken and vegetables get a few seared bits: to the contrary, these add to the flavor.
Brush with marinade again.
Serve hot.

Fruit Ice (Kōri)

This very popular summer treat is eaten throughout Japan. Shops selling it generally advertise with a blue, white, and red sign marked with the ideograph for "ice." Flavors depend on the customer's choice, as do the garnishes. Any kind of flavored fruit syrup is fine.

4 or more heaping cups shaved ice (if you do not have an ice shaver—available from most Oriental stores—crush ice cubes in a blender to a slush)
8 TBS or more flavored syrup (strawberry, raspberry, or melon)

Garnishes: A choice of canned orange or tangerine sections, apple slices, halved strawberries, blueberries, watermelon wedges about 2 inches long, melon balls, sweet red beans (*adzuki*, sold in small cans at Oriental groceries), or soft jelly bean candies.

Place four glass bowls in refrigerator for at least 1 hour before preparation.
Fill with shaved ice to make a mound.
Pour 2 tablespoons of your syrup of choice over the mound.
Garnish with fruit of your choice.
Serve with a dessert spoon.

Cheesecake (Chīzu Kēki)

Cheese is not part of traditional Japanese food culture, but, in modern times, cheesecake has become a part of everyday eating: most coffee shops will have it

on the menu, and almost all bakeries and sweet shops up and down the country carry it. It is eaten as a snack or dessert, and is drunk with either Japanese green tea, Western tea, or freshly brewed coffee.

Cheesecake comes in several variations. "Rare" (*rea*) is the usual term for a refrigerated gelatin cheesecake. Another variation is flavored with green tea powder (the kind used for the traditional tea ceremony). The recipe given here is for a baked Japanese-style cheesecake.

1 cup cream cheese
2 ounces butter
½ cup whipping cream
¼ cup cake flour mixed with 1 TBS cornstarch
6 eggs, separated
¼ tsp salt
1 TBS lemon juice
1 tsp lemon rind, grated
¼ tsp cream of tartar
⅔ cup granulated sugar

Line the bottom and sides of an 8-inch cake pan with wax paper, to extend 1½ inches above the pan. Lightly butter wax paper.
Melt cream cheese, butter, and cream in a double boiler over hot water.
Remove and quickly cool the mixture by placing in an iced basin, stirring well.
Mix in thoroughly flour, egg yolks, salt, lemon juice, and grated lemon rind.
Using an electric mixer, gently beat egg whites and cream of tartar.
Gradually add sugar and beat to soft peaks.
Fold in one-third of the whisked egg white into cream cheese mixture.
Fold in remaining egg white thoroughly, but do not overmix.
Pour into prepared cake pan.
Place pan inside a bain-marie or a baking tray.
Pour boiling water half way up the tray.
Bake in preheated 300°F oven for 1½ hours, or until set and golden brown.
Leave in the oven with door ajar for an hour until cake cools.
Remove from oven and unmold cake.
Refrigerate, covered.
Serve cold with Japanese or English tea.

JORDAN

The Kingdom of Jordan lies on the eastern bank of the Jordan River. The climate is desert hot with mild winters. The northwestern plateau and the Jordan Valley beneath it are very fertile, enabling the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, and wheat.

The population is largely Arab Muslim, divided between Bedouin and those of settled descent. The cuisine reflects this division, with nomadic and agricultural Middle Eastern dishes featuring on most meals.

Foodstuffs

- Flat breads (*khubes saj*), baked on a stone or an inverted iron bowl, are the staple for many. Oven-baked breads (*khubes tabun*). Whole-meal flat breads (*shrak*), soft or crisp, which are as thin as paper. Rice and noodles are common in urban areas.
- Meat, particularly mutton and chicken, is eaten as often as possible.
- Milk products include fresh and soured milk, both from cows and sheep. Milk is made into butter, thickened yogurt and dried yogurt (*labaneh* and *jameed*), and soft cheeses.
- Vegetables: tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions, beans, sesame, eggplants. Many country people collect wild greens to add to the food.
- Fruit: apples, citrus, grapes, figs, pomegranates.
- Spices used include cumin, garlic, pepper, coriander, turmeric, ghee, and *sumac*, dried ground purple berries with a tangy lemon flavor.

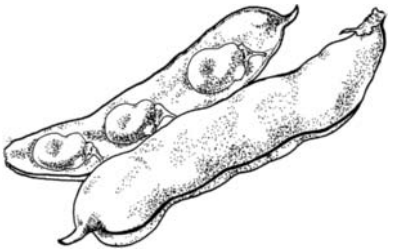
Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes are common; particularly the nomad's *mansaf* (common dish), which is served to guests.
- Eggs, olives, white goat's cheese, *labane* (strained yogurt), and olive oil are the foods most commonly eaten at all times, by rich and poor alike, usually with tomatoes and cucumbers.
- *Fassouliah* (beans) of various sorts eaten as a mash, garnished with olive oil and scooped with flat breads.
- Many meals are composed of a single dish of meat and rice, with vegetables, which is shared by everyone.

- *Ma'alak*: lamb heart, lungs, liver, and innards, chopped and fried in garlic, often eaten on Friday mornings by many families for breakfast.
- *Musakhan*: wraps of chicken and onions cooked with sour, purple *sumac* spice.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks are eaten by most people, though Bedouin traditionally eat only twice a day (and only once on long journeys).
- In traditional homes, diners share common dishes of rice, meat, and flat bread, eating only with the three middle fingers of the right hand.
- Meals are often preceded by soup, drunk from glasses.
- Breakfast: freshly baked bread dipped in olive oil or yogurt; fresh-cut tomatoes, cucumbers, or onions. Washed down with sweet tea.
- Lunch: often skipped by Bedouin. Bean mash, a salad, boiled egg, and flat breads are common, washed down by sweet tea. It can be taken as a major meal in the form of a *mansaf* (a rice and lamb dish) if guests arrive.
- Evening meal: for urban people, the main meal of the day, though for many, a lighter meal. As main meal it will contain meat, if available, and rice and vegetables, sometimes cooked together.
- Fruit may be consumed at any time during the day.
- Coffee, tea, and juices are consumed, as are a variety of local and international sweet sodas. Coffee service can be elaborate in towns and countryside alike.



FAVA BEAN

Fried Tomatoes
(Bandoora Maqliya Ma' thoom)

This is served as an appetizer in many urban homes.

4 cloves garlic
salt and pepper to taste
½ small hot pepper, cored, seeded, and shredded
2 TBS fresh parsley, chopped
2 TBS oil
2 large, firm tomatoes, thickly sliced

Crush garlic with pepper, salt, and hot pepper.
Stir mixture into parsley and set aside.
Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add the tomato slices and cook for about a minute on one side. Turn over and sprinkle slices with the garlic mixture.
Continue to cook for another minute, moving tomatoes gently with a spatula to keep them from sticking.
Turn slices again and cook until they are done but not disintegrating.
Slide the tomato slices onto a plate and serve immediately.

Country-Style Beans (Fassouliah al Balad)

This may be eaten as a main or only dish for lunch. It is also served as an appetizer in urban homes, particularly in the countryside. It is a Jordanian version of the Egyptian *ful medames*.

1 cup dried small fava beans, rinsed
8 cups water
1 can cooked chickpeas, with liquid
2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
¼ cup olive oil
3 medium onions, diced
5 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 tsp oregano
salt and pepper to taste
cayenne pepper to taste

Bring the fava beans and water to a boil in a large pot. Cover and cook over medium heat for an hour and a half.
Add potatoes and cook for a further 25 minutes.
Meanwhile, heat oil in a frying pan and sauté onions until golden.
Add garlic and cilantro and stir-fry for 2 minutes.
Add the contents of the frying pan with the remaining ingredients to the fava beans and bring to a boil.
Simmer over medium heat for 30 minutes.
Serve hot.
Note: If you use large fava beans you may need to soak them for 24 hours. Peel before cooking by squeezing between your fingers.

Meat and Rice Dish (Mansaf)

A typical Bedouin (nomad) dish, this is prepared for weddings and other celebrations such as welcoming a guest.

8 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
½ cup pine nuts
½ cup flaked almonds
2 large onions, cut into thick slices
1 tsp turmeric
½ tsp allspice
½ tsp cinnamon
2 pounds cubed stewing lamb
water as needed
salt and pepper to taste
3 cups long-grain rice
1 pound *jameed* (dried yogurt, or substitute 2 containers plain yogurt)
2 TBS cornflour dissolved in 4 TBS water
3–4 pieces of large, soft Middle Eastern flat bread (or 8 pita)

If you have no *jameed* (sometimes available from Middle Eastern shops), prepare the yogurt curd a day before by placing yogurt into a fine kitchen sieve or cheesecloth and allowing whey to drain. Reserve the whey and sieved curd separately.

Heat 2 tablespoons ghee in a frying pan and quickly fry pine nuts and almonds until golden. Remove and set aside.

Add 2 tablespoons ghee to frying pan, and sauté onions until softened, about 5–7 minutes. Add turmeric, allspice, and cinnamon, and fry for 1–2 minutes, stirring constantly. Set aside.

In a covered saucepan, simmer lamb with water just to cover for about 30 minutes; season with salt and pepper, add the spiced onion mixture, and continue to simmer until very tender, about 45–60 minutes more.

Meanwhile prepare the rice. Heat 1 tablespoon clarified butter in a heavy pot with a tight-fitting lid.

Stir in the rice and add 6 cups water. Bring to a boil, cover, and cook on very low heat until rice is done, about 15–20 minutes. Stir in 2 tablespoons ghee and let the rice rest undisurbed, covered, for about 15–20 minutes.

When the meat is done, transfer it to a covered oven-proof container and mix well with *jameed* or drained yogurt. Keep warm in a low oven until assembly.

To the broth in the saucepan, add the whey and cornstarch mixture and allow to thicken over medium heat, stirring constantly. Set aside.

To assemble (work quickly so that lamb is hot when it gets to the table): in a large, deep serving dish (a large enamel basin is often used), place a layer of the flat breads so they protrude above the dish rim and entirely cover the bottom.

Moisten the bread with some of the broth and whey mixture. (Place the rest in bowl or gravy boat for passing at the table.)

Place a pyramid of rice on the bread.

Arrange the meat on the rice. Decorate with pine nuts and almonds.

Mix remaining 1 tablespoon ghee with remaining whey and sprinkle over the rice.

Eat warm, not hot, with all diners helping themselves from the dish. Diners use only the right hand to make a small ball of rice and meat to pop into the mouth; the fingers must not touch the lips (takes some practice).

Meat and Eggplant Platter (Makhlubbi)

This is a popular dish for a main meal, usually served with pita bread, thick yogurt, and sliced cucumbers drizzled with olive oil and lemon juice.

1 medium eggplant, sliced ⅛-inch thick
4 TBS olive oil
2 medium carrots, peeled and sliced into ⅛-inch disks
1 pound lamb, cubed
⅓ cup finely chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
salt to taste
½ tsp black pepper
water as needed
2 cups long-grain rice
¼ tsp turmeric

(*continued*)

2 fresh, firm tomatoes, cut in wedges
2 lemons, cut in wedges
4–5 sprigs of parsley
¼ cup toasted almonds

Salt eggplant and allow to drain for 30 minutes. Rinse, drain then pat dry.
In a large, heavy saucepan heat 2 tablespoons olive oil. Fry eggplant until golden. Remove and set aside. Fry carrots lightly in same pan. Remove and add to eggplant.
Add the remaining oil to the saucepan. Brown meat quickly, then add the onion and garlic and stir-fry for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in spices, salt, pepper, and 2 cups water.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and gently simmer, covered, until meat is tender (30–45 minutes).
Boil 3 cups water in a separate pot. Remove from heat. Add rice and turmeric. Stir once.
Cover and soak for 10 minutes. Drain and set rice aside.
Drain the meat, reserving the broth.
In a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid, place the meat in one layer.
Layer the fried vegetables over the meat.
Top with the soaked rice, carefully leveling it.
Add enough water to the reserved meat broth to make 4 cups. Slowly pour over the rice (do not stir).
Place the saucepan over medium heat, bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to gently simmer, covered, until all the liquid is absorbed (about 15 minutes).
Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 15–20 minutes.
Invert the saucepan (you may need help from another person with this) on a large serving platter, at least 2–3 inches larger in diameter than the saucepan.
Let stand for 10 minutes to let the contents slowly descend.
Carefully remove the pan so that rice mound retains its shape.
Sprinkle with toasted almonds.
Garnish with tomato and lemon wedges and parsley.

Coffee (Qahwa)

This coffee is consumed all over the Middle East and is nowhere more important than among the nomads. The sound of the mortar and pestle means a guest has arrived (see also Eritrea for the box "Coffee Ritual").

2 TBS unroasted Arabica-type coffee beans
3 cups water
4 cardamom pods
1–4 threads saffron (optional)

Toast the coffee beans rapidly in an iron wok until they brown slightly and you can smell a strong coffee odor. Be careful not to burn.
Using a brass mortar and pestle, pound the beans thoroughly into as fine a powder as you can manage.

Boil water in a pot.
Add coffee and bring to a boil over low heat.
Remove from heat as the coffee foams up.
Allow to settle for a minute.
Add cardamom to the pot (and saffron if desired).
Boil again once and serve.
Pour carefully into small coffee cups, trying to avoid the sediment.
Allow a minute or two before drinking for the sediment to settle in the cup.
Do not stir.

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan, the ninth largest country in the world, spans three time zones, from the Caspian Sea to China. Once part of the Russian empire (from the eighteenth century), then the USSR, Kazakhstan became independent in 1991. The name Kazakh derives from Turkish and means "free or free-roaming," referring to the nomadic horseback lifestyle, and is related to the word "cossack." A third of the country is desert and a fifth is mountainous. It has four seasons with very cold winters and hot summers. Wheat, barley, rice, and other grains are widely grown, making Kazakhstan one among the world's largest grain exporters. Livestock is raised for meat and dairy products. Kazakhstan's coastline on the Caspian Sea also provides fish.

The main ethnic groups are Kazakhs and Russians, with minorities of Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Uighur, Germans, and Jews. Roughly half are Muslims and the remainder Christians, mainly Russian Orthodox.

Kazakh cuisine is similar to other nomadic central and northern Asian foods (Mongolian, Uzbek, Uighur) in its reliance on meat, fermented dairy products, and flat breads. It is strongly influenced by Russian, Tatar, central, and northeastern Asian (especially Korean) foods. In common with all nomadic cultures, Kazakhs are very hospitable and generous with food, even to unexpected guests.

Foodstuffs

- Staple is bread; fried bread (*baursak*) and flat bread (*non*, also *nan*).
- Meat: lamb, horse, camel, poultry (chicken, goose, turkey, pheasant, duck), fish (sturgeon, salmon, pike-perch, carp, bream), and fish roe (caviar).
- Preserved meats: horsemeat sausages (*kazy*, *shuzhuk*).
- Dairy products: sour cream, butter, yogurt, cheese from goat's, cow's, or horse's milk, dried or fresh curds, fermented milk drinks from yogurt, horse or camel milk.
- Onion, cabbage, eggplant, carrot, potato, greens, radish, cucumber, tomato, pumpkin, peas. Preserved vegetables: sauerkraut, Korean-style *kimchi* (spicy pickled cabbage).
- Apricots, apples, raspberries, strawberries, peaches, grapes (locally grown or imported from neighboring countries).

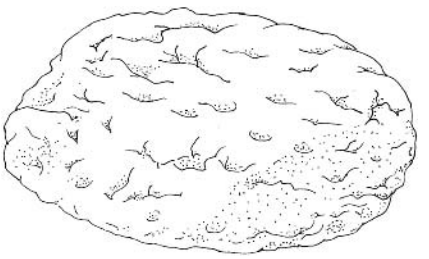
- Seasonings: onion, black pepper corns, garlic, bay leaf, dill, parsley, fennel, cilantro; *tuzdyk*—a special herb sauce with cilantro (*kinza*).

Typical Dishes

- *Besbarmak*—diamond-shaped pasta eaten with thin slices of horsemeat, mutton, or camel and vegetables. *Besbarmak* literally means five fingers, because the dish is eaten with the fingers of the right hand following Muslim eating tradition.
- Rice dishes: *plov* (pilaf) made with mutton, yellow turnip, and rice; sweet *plov* made of dried apricots, raisins, and prunes.
- *Naryn*: sliced sausages served with cold noodles for special occasions.
- Soups: fat-rich broth (*sorpa*), soup of internal organs.
- Grilled/roasted meats: brisket or leg of mutton marinated in vinegar, salt, and pepper and roasted over coals; skewered mutton or other meat (*shashlyk*) served with raw onion.
- Noodle dishes: layered pasta with spicy meat and vegetable gravy (*lagman*); noodles with meat and vegetable sauce of black radish, sweet pepper, onions, tomatoes, and cilantro, dill, or parsley (*kespe*).
- Meat pies: pastry stuffed with meat and onion or pumpkin, potato, cabbage, mushrooms or nuts (*samsa*), deep-fried with meat and onion (*chibureki*).
- Savory dumplings (*manty*) steamed and filled with lamb, mutton, horse, fish, or mixed with pumpkin or carrot; fried meat-filled dumplings (*beliashis*).
- Sweet steamed pastry rolls (*zhuta*) filled with pumpkin or carrot and sugar.
- Drinks: *kumys* (fermented mare's milk drink); *airan* (yogurt drink from horse's milk); *shubat* (drink from camel's milk). Salted milky tea is the most common drink.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: millet porridge with sour cream, curd, or other dairy product; salty milk tea; or *nan* with *kumys* (fermented milk drink).
- Lunch: *nan*, *kumys*, curds or cheese, and fruit in summer; salty milk tea, noodles with soup and bits of meat in winter.
- Dinner: grilled meat with bread or *plov*; broth or soup; fruit; sweet.
- Snacks: savory or sweet pies (*samsa*, *chibureki*); fruits or nuts in syrup; fried fritters.
- Feasts: guests (expected or unexpected) are entertained lavishly with several courses, according to nomadic etiquette. First, fermented milk drinks; then salty milk tea accompanied by dairy products, dried and fresh fruit, fruit preserves, sweet fritters, cakes, other sweetmeats. Appetizers follow, usually assorted sausages and dried meats eaten with flat bread and salad. Next come boiled meats, eaten with pasta; the broth served separately. Afterward come grilled marinated meats, eaten with onion-flavored flat bread or fried bread. Sweetmeats and fresh and dried fruits end the feast.



FLAT BREAD

PILAF(S)

A dish of rice, fried quickly in hot oil, then cooked in stock with meat and vegetables, and fruit. The dish may be of Persian or central Asian origin. The word has numerous variants (*pilav*, *plov*, *polow*, *pulao*, and possibly Spanish *paella*) and is common throughout the Persian-influenced world. *Pilaf* is a very old dish and was served to Alexander the Great when he conquered parts of modern-day Uzbekistan. The national variants on *pilaf* are almost uncountable, and it is popular in the United States as "rice pilaf."

Radish Salad (Shalgam)

This is eaten as an appetizer during feasts.

2 TBS vegetable oil
2 TBS vinegar
½ tsp sugar
salt and cayenne pepper to taste
1 pound radishes, peeled and sliced into thin strips
2 bell peppers, cored, seeded, and sliced in thin strips
2 carrots, peeled and sliced in thin strips
1 onion, sliced in thin strips
1 cup finely shredded cabbage
1 clove garlic, finely minced

Prepare dressing by mixing oil, vinegar, sugar, salt, garlic, and cayenne.
Rub radishes and carrots with salt.
Reserve a bit of the peppers, radishes, and carrots for garnish.
Mix the remaining vegetables thoroughly. Pour on dressing and toss lightly.
Garnish with reserved vegetables and serve.

Noodles with Meat Sauce (Kespe)

This is a Kazakh staple. This particular recipe is tinged by Russian influences: dill and carrots. You may opt to buy dried egg noodles and cook according to the instructions instead of making your own from scratch, as the Kazakhs do. The greens often include cilantro, called *kinza* in Kazakh.

Meat Sauce

2 pounds mutton or beef, cubed
water to cover
salt and pepper to taste
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
4 large tomatoes, chopped, or 1 8-ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 onion, chopped
2 TBS melted fat (mutton fat preferred, or substitute butter)
2 bay leaves
2 cups *katyk* (goat's milk yogurt, or any plain yogurt)
½ cup dill, finely minced (or a mix of dill, cilantro, and parsley)

Place meat with water, salt, and pepper in a covered saucepan and bring to a boil.
Skim off scum and discard.
Reduce heat; simmer for 1 hour.
Add carrots, tomatoes, onion, fat, and bay leaves.
Season to taste.
Add noodles and cook until *al dente*.
Transfer to four bowls.
Place dill and *katyk* on the table for people to help themselves.
Serve very hot.

Egg Noodles

1 pound flour
2 eggs, beaten
½ cup water
¼ tsp salt
additional flour for rolling out

Sift flour and salt into a bowl, making a crater on top.
Add beaten eggs. Mix in water a little at a time until the dough comes away from the side of the bowl.
Take dough out and knead on a floured board until shiny and elastic.
Let rest for 30–40 minutes, covered with a damp towel.
Roll out on floured surface about ¼-inch thick.
Slice into ½-inch-wide strips.
Allow to dry slightly, uncovered, until needed.

Stuffed Dumplings (Manty)

The term is similar to the Chinese *mantou* (steamed buns) and may well be derived from the days the Kazakhs were a central part of the Mongol empire. *Manty* are common throughout the Turkic-Mongol world, including, of course, the Kazakhs. Grated carrot or pumpkin or a mixture of both is sometimes used instead of meat. This is a special dish, made when there are many hands to help wrap the dumplings.

1½ pounds flour
1 tsp salt
3 cups water
1 TBS oil for oiling steamer
3 cups sour cream

Sift flour and salt into bowl.
Add water, a little at a time until you have a dough that comes away from the side of the bowl (you may need to add water or flour to get it right).
Knead in bowl for 5 minutes, then on a floured board until elastic and shiny.
Return to floured bowl and allow to rest for 30–40 minutes.
Roll out about ⅛-inch thick.

(*continued*)

Cut out pastry circles about 3 inches in diameter with a wide glass or cookie cutter.
Place a teaspoonful of stuffing in the center of the pastry circle. Fold up the edges to make a crescent. Crimp the edges firmly to seal.
Oil the top of a large steamer (metal or bamboo) to prevent sticking. (Or alternatively use a metal rack over a saucepan of boiling water.)
Place the stuffed pastries slightly apart and steam over boiling water for about ½ hour until done (test one to check).
Transfer to a serving plate; pour over sour cream before serving.

Stuffing

1 pound minced meat (mutton or beef, or substitute grated carrot)
1 pound pumpkin flesh, grated
2 onions, chopped fine
½ pound mutton fat (preferably from tail, or substitute more fatty meat or butter)
1 tsp salt

Mix meat, pumpkin, onions, fat, and salt thoroughly.

Steamed Carrot Roll (Zhuta)

Carrots are a common vegetable easily grown in Kazakhstan. Here they are used as a sweet stuffing.

1½ pounds flour
1 tsp salt
1½ pints water
1 egg white, beaten, for sealing rolls
1 tsp oil for oiling steamer

Sift flour and salt into bowl.
Add water, a little at a time until you have a dough that comes away from the side of the bowl (you may need to add water or flour to get it right).
Knead in bowl for 5 minutes, then on a floured board until elastic and shiny.
Return to floured bowl and allow to rest for 30–40 minutes.
Roll out on floured board until ⅛-inch thick.
Cover evenly with stuffing.
Roll up lightly, as for a Swiss roll, so that the filling does not ooze out.
Stick edges together with water or a little beaten egg white.
Place in an oiled *kaskan* (steamer) and steam for 25–30 minutes.
Serve warm or cold, sliced crosswise.

Sweet Stuffing

2 pounds carrot or pumpkin flesh, shredded
3 ounces butter
sugar to taste (the pumpkin and carrots may be sweet enough on their own)

Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat.
Add vegetables and stir well.

Cook over low heat until tender.
Add sugar to taste.

Flavored Rice (Plov *or* Pilav)

This is a Kazakh variation—one of many across Asia—of a Persian original called *pilaf* (see box "Pilaf[s]").

2 TBS melted fat (mutton is recommended, or substitute butter)
1 onion, sliced into thin rings
½ pound mutton or chicken breast, diced
2 large carrots, scraped and cut into julienne strips
2 cups rice, rinsed and drained
3½ cups water
1 cup dried apricots or apples, diced
salt and pepper to taste

Heat fat over medium heat in a covered heavy saucepan.
Sauté onion until golden.
Add meat and fry until slightly browned.
Add carrots; season, and cook for an additional 5 minutes.
Pour rice over the vegetables and meat without stirring.
Carefully add water without disturbing the rice; bring to a boil.
Pierce rice in several places with the handle of a wooden spoon.
Top with dried fruit, again without disturbing rice.
Reduce heat to lowest, cover, and simmer for about 30–35 minutes.
Remove from heat, and let rest for 15–20 minutes.
While serving, ensure each helping has some of all three layers.

Sweet Fritters (Domalak Baursak)

These fried rolls are often eaten as snacks or served after meals as dessert.

1 cup cottage cheese
1 cup flour
1 egg, beaten
1 TBS butter, melted
1 TBS sugar
¼ tsp salt
8 cups water
¼–½ cup flour
oil for deep-frying
½ cup sour cream

In a food processor, process cottage cheese until smooth.
Add flour, egg, butter, sugar, and salt to make a stiff dough.
Remove dough and knead for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Roll it out into a cylinder about ½ inch in diameter. Cut into 2-inch slices.
Bring water to a simmer in a large pot.

(*continued*)

Add fritters a few at a time, and cook for 2–3 minutes after they float. Drain thoroughly.
Heat oil to 360°F.
Roll drained fritters in flour and slip into the hot oil a few at a time. Fry to a golden brown. Drain on paper towels.
To serve: arrange on serving dish, spoon sour cream over fritters, and serve.

Kazakh Cereal Bar (Zhent)

Zhent, often called Kazakh chocolate, makes a nutritious, energy-filled food for journeys and at times of war. Though the end result bears no similarity in taste to chocolate, it is comparable in sweetness, its provision of energy, and texture. *Irimshik*, the dried curd that is one component, can be eaten on its own, much like cheese. The original dish uses millet instead of oatmeal.

1 cup quick oatmeal flakes
¾ cup *irimshik* (or substitute dry goat's or sheep's cheese or grated parmesan or other hard cheese)
¼ cup butter, melted
½ cup sugar
1 TBS raisins

In a food processor or blender, process cereal and cheese until well mixed.
Add butter and sugar, mixing well.
Stir in raisins.
Transfer to a flat tray to form a layer ½-inch thick, and allow to set for 1 hour.
Cut into cubes with a sharp, heated knife.
Serve as a snack.

Kazakh Tea (Chai)

Salted milk tea is drunk all over Central Asia. Sweet fritters, jam, butter or sour cream, curds, dried fruit, and other sweetmeats are served with tea. Often in winter, pieces of curd or dried meat are dropped into the tea, making it more of a reviving soup.

4 cups water
5 tsp loose black tea
4 cardamom pods
1 tsp fennel seeds
2 cups milk
sugar or honey to taste
salt
butter or sour cream

Combine water, tea, cardamom, and fennel seeds and simmer over low heat for 3 minutes.
Add milk and simmer for an additional 2 minutes.
Strain tea into cups; add sugar or honey. Add salt, butter, or sour cream to taste.

KENYA

Kenya is an East African country, between Ethiopia and Somalia on the north and Tanzania to the south, bordered on the west by the African Rift system. The eastern coastline is hot and humid. The north is largely desert scrub. The rest of the country is largely a cool highland plateau. The Kenyan highlands are a source of various agricultural products ranging from vegetables and herbs to flowers. Much of the produce is exported to Europe and the Middle East.

Forty large ethnic groups and many more small ones make up the population, but a common staple is *ugali*, a stiff porridge made from white cornmeal (or, in some areas, sorghum or millet). Cooked to a thinner, gruel-like consistency called *uji*, it is served for breakfast. There is a dark *ugali* made from millet flour.

Foodstuffs

- Cornmeal, sorghum, millet are the main staples.
- Meat: goat and chicken are most common in the countryside. Beef and game can be found in the cities.
- Fish: fresh fish and seafood on the coast. Dried and smoked fish are used for flavoring in many households, depending on area.
- Milk and milk products are sold throughout the urban areas, less commonly in the countryside. Some ethnic groups (Maasai, Turkana, Massalit, Karomojong) who are cattle nomads subsist largely on milk or a mixture of milk and blood extracted from living cattle.
- Vegetables: greens such as spinach, onions, wild mushrooms in some areas.
- Fruit: plentiful tropical fruit; some local, some introduced. Mango, pineapples, strawberries, passion fruit have been introduced and are now raised commercially for export and local consumption. Native oranges, bananas, coconuts on the coast, baobab fruit are local fruits that are available most of the year.
- Preserved imports, particularly condensed milk and corned beef, have been incorporated into the cuisine.

Typical Dishes

- *Ugali*, a stiff porridge from cornmeal or millet, or *irio*, a more elaborate version, are the common staples.
- Grilled meat (*nyama choma*) is most popular in the cities and is made from goat, beef, or whatever is available. Grilled chicken (*mchuzi wa kuku*) is also very popular.
- *M'baazi* (cooked pea beans), which is sometimes an appetizer but may also be a main dish.
- *Samaki na nazi* (fish and coconut) is eaten along the coast.
- Common beverages include *maziwa ya kuganda* (sour milk), ginger beer, and sorrel tea. Many younger Kenyans drink large quantities of soda pops.

Styles of Eating

- People eat three meals a day if they can afford it.
- Middle-class Kenyans tend to eat like their European counterparts, and table settings include forks and spoons, glasses, and flat plates.
- In the countryside, traditional households eat around a shared dish of the staple, which is enlivened by side dishes. Food is brought to the table all at the same time, and people help themselves as they please. Often, dining is not around a table but with diners seated in armchairs, plate on one's lap.
- Breakfast consists of fresh or fried bread and coffee, and sometimes egg.
- Lunch and dinner tend to be similar: a staple with a stew of meat or vegetables, sometimes more than one stew if the person can afford it.
- Sweet things are rarely eaten, except fruit in season or during special occasions. Snacks of fruit sometimes supplement scant meals.

Corn and Beans Mash (Githeri)

Githeri is a traditional staple for the Kikuyu people of Kenya.

1 cup dried whole kernel corn (maize: the kind for tortillas is best), rinsed in cold water
1 cup dried beans (kidney, pinto, navy beans, or similar), soaked in cold water for a few hours and drained
water to cover
salt to taste

Combine corn and beans.
Add enough cold water to cover.
Bring to a boil and cook over high heat for 10 minutes.
Reduce heat.
Cover and simmer for 2 hours.
Cook until almost dry: most of the water should be absorbed or evaporated, and the corn and beans should be tender yet still intact, not mushy.
Season to taste.
Serve hot with any dish.

Corn, Peas, and Potato Staple (Irio)

This is a Kikuyu traditional staple, similar to, but more elaborate than, *githeri*.

1 cup dried peas soaked overnight or 1 pound frozen peas
1 large potato, peeled and diced
1 cup dried corn (maize) kernels or 1 pound frozen corn
½ pound greens or spinach
salt and black pepper to taste
¼ cup water
1 medium onion, finely chopped and fried brown

Boil peas in water to cover until nearly tender, about 20–30 minutes. Drain. (If using frozen peas, omit this step and merely add a few tablespoons water.)
In a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid, add the peas and all other ingredients. There should be just enough moisture in the vegetables themselves to eanable them to steam-cook. (If not, add ¼ cup water.)
Season with salt and pepper, and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes.
Mash with a potato masher until smooth and thick (or puree in blender or food processor).
Serve hot with roasted or barbecued meat (to make *nyamana irio*) and gravy.

Bean Stew

This might be served for any meal.

2 cups dried beans (any kind, although pigeon peas are most common)
1½ pints boiling water
2 TBS oil
1 pound stewing beef, cut into 1-inch cubes
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 medium carrots, peeled and cut in rounds
½ pound kale or cabbage, tough ribs discarded
1 cup fresh or frozen maize kernels
1 tsp curry powder
salt to taste
½ pint boiling water

Add beans to boiling water in a large stewing pot.
Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 2 hours or overnight.
Drain and simmer in water to cover for 20 minutes.
Meanwhile, heat oil in a frying pan and brown the meat.
Add onion and fry until golden, stirring constantly.
Stir in meat and onion mixture and all other ingredients to the beans.
Add boiling water and simmer for 30–45 minutes until meat is tender.
Serve with *ugali* (see Angola for the box "African Staple") as main dish.

Cooling Relish (Saladi)

This salad relish is added to and mixed with hot spicy food a little at a time to "cool" the spiciness of the dish and change its texture.

2 cups cabbage, finely shredded
½ cup carrots, scraped and sliced very thin
½ cup scallions, sliced very thin
¼ cup green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into fine strips
1 TBS lime juice

Toss ingredients together.
Serve in small individual bowls.

Pea Beans or Pigeon Peas (M'baazi)

This is a standard side dish for many Kenyan families. You can substitute any bean for the traditional pigeon pea.

1 cup dried beans, soaked overnight
1 quart boiling salted water
2 TBS vegetable oil
½ cup onions, chopped fine
½ cup green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped fine
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes or one whole chili pepper
1 cup coconut milk

Simmer beans for 1 hour in salted water until tender. Drain.
In a separate pot heat oil and sauté onions until brown. Add green pepper and seasoning.
Add beans and coconut milk.
Simmer gently until sauce is thickened.
Correct the seasoning.
Serve hot or cold with *ugali* (see Angola for the box "African Staple").

Barbecued Meat (Nyama Choma)

This is the favorite dining-out dish of most Kenyan families. Nairobi has hundreds, perhaps thousands, of places that serve roast meat to avid customers.

2–3 pounds of any piece of meat suitable for roasting (beef chuck ribs, rolled ribs, rump, pork shoulder or leg)
2 cloves garlic, minced
juice of 1 lemon
about 1 TBS curry powder
about 1 TBS turmeric powder

about 1 TBS coriander powder
about 1 TBS chili powder
salt and black pepper to taste

Combine garlic, lemon juice, and spices (to taste) in a large bowl. Mix well.
Add meat and rub marinade all over. Allow to marinate at least 1 hour.
Grill meat over charcoal or broil it under a grill. Use a meat thermometer to check for doneness.
Serve with *ugali* or with *irio*.

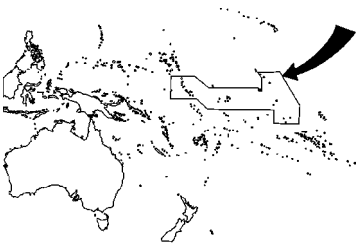
Mango Ice Cream

Mangoes are common fruits in season, and people consume huge amounts raw. The pulp is available canned throughout Kenya and for export. Wealthier households make this for dessert or for a snack.

4 or 5 ripe mangos, peeled, pitted, and mashed (about 2 cups)
2 TBS lemon rind shredded fine or grated
½ cup condensed milk
½ tsp salt
1 cup heavy cream
½ cup sugar

Combine mashed mangos, rind, condensed milk, and salt.
Whip cream with sugar until it stands in stiff peaks.
Fold the fruit mixture into the whipped cream.
Pour into freezer trays or an ice cream freezer and freeze. Break up ice crystals after 1 hour and return to freezer for another hour. Beat the frozen mango cream again to break up the crystals, and return to freezer to freeze for 2 hours or until solid (or use ice cream churn following instructions).

KIRIBATI



A cluster of 33 coral atolls in the Pacific straddling the equator, formerly known as the Gilbert Islands, Kiribati (pronounced *keer-ree-bahss*) became independent in 1979 under the new name. The atolls are sandy, with little arable land, and so edible plants are carefully gardened. The climate is tropical, mediated by cool trade winds, which keeps the temperature comfortable throughout most of the year. Kiribati has been strongly influenced by British, missionary, and more recently, Japanese food practices.

Foodstuffs

- Breadfruit and, more recently, rice are the common staples.
- The most valuable plant is the coconut, which provides food, drink, and cooking oil, among other uses.
- Fish are an important food resource. Marine foods include tuna and other large fish from the deep sea, and coastal cockles, octopus, clams, sea urchin, eels, and squid. Milkfish are today raised in ponds on some of the islands.
- Pandanus flour (*te kabubu*) and other products made from the pandanus (screwpine) fruit are important food sources. The fruit rarely ripens in other places, and it is perhaps the most unique Kiribati food resource.
- Among the more northern islands, taro and a variety of tree figs are cultivated.
- Due to the common occurrence of drought (and consequent famine), the population has evolved methods of preserving as many foods as possible—coconuts, pandanus fruit, taro, fish—by drying and fermentation.
- Introduced foods include canned tuna and corned beef, evaporated milk, and granulated sugar.

Typical Dishes

- Pancakes, on their own or with jam.
- Raw tuna with rice and soy sauce; grilled fish; fish tempura; dried, salted octopus eaten raw or grilled.
- Boiled breadfruit as a side dish, fried breadfruit chips.
- Pigs roasted in an earth oven.

- Imported instant noodles (usually chicken flavored), eaten as part of a meal with rice and sometimes brought to celebratory meals as well.
- Imported corned beef, either fried or straight out of the can.
- The most common drink is palm toddy (*karewe*), the sap of the palm. This can be concentrated into a syrup—*te kamaimai*—which is diluted with water to make a sweet refreshing drink, or fermented.

Styles of Eating

- If possible, people eat three times a day with snacks.
- People eat from their own plates from a common serving dish, with little ceremony. Food is scarce in the islands and sharing food is common.
- Breakfast: usually rice with soy sauce, washed down with a coconut toddy drink (*te kamaimai*).
- Lunch and dinner are no different in composition: rice or taro with fish or some other protein, or whatever is available, preserves or pickles.
- Snacks: dried sea worms, which are chewed like chewing gum; potato or breadfruit crisps; Chinese dried plums; ice pops made from powdered milk, mixed with coconut toddy or sugar and dyed bright colors; pancakes (which may also be part of a main meal).
- On special occasions, pork, taro, fish, and other foods wrapped in leaves and cooked for several hours in an earth oven are consumed.

Corned Beef Stew

As in many places in the world that have been exposed to European and American food ways, corned beef has become a delicacy that is often made and consumed at festivals and parties.

1 can corned beef
1 TBS oil
2 TBS tomato ketchup
soy sauce to taste

Break the corned beef up into small chunks.
Heat oil in a wok and stir-fry the beef until warmed through and slightly browned.
Add the ketchup, stirring constantly.
When the ketchup has been absorbed, add soy sauce to taste.
Serve over rice.

Ice Pops

The climate makes cold foods very attractive, and the fairly recent introduction of refrigeration means that some households can prepare a kids' favorite, with a local twist.

1 cup powdered milk
2 cups palm toddy (or 1½ cups light sugar syrup mixed with ½ cup coconut water), warmed (not boiled)
food dye of your choice

Dissolve milk powder in warm toddy.
Allow to cool.
Add food coloring if desired and mix well. Cool.
Freeze in ice tray.
Serve as a snack.

KOREA

Korea is located on a peninsula in East Asia between Japan and China. It was a Japanese colony between 1911 and 1945 and subsequently suffered a devastating civil war (complicated by a UN war with China). The climate is temperate: warmer and subtropical in the south, cooler to cold in the north. The substrate of the land is largely granite, and so is not all suitable for cultivation.

The population is almost homogeneously Korean, save for a tiny Chinese minority. The country is divided into two political regimes. There is little traditional, linguistic, or culinary difference between the two states except for that imposed by differences of rule over the past half-century.

North Korea (north of the 38th parallel) is a poor, underdeveloped state, controlled by a Communist dynasty. The North has been unable to feed its population for decades. The South is a successful industrial state, whose farmers have been able, in recent years, to supply most food needs.

The traditional preferred staple is rice. The North tends to be cooler than the South, so rice does not grow well, and the staple is sometimes barley and sweet potatoes (when available).

Korean food is influenced by China through historical cultural exchanges and, to a limited extent, by Japan. There are similarities to Mongolian food, notably in the preference for meat, particularly grilled. However, Korean food is distinguished by a liberal use of chili peppers, garlic, green onions, and sesame oil.

Foodstuffs

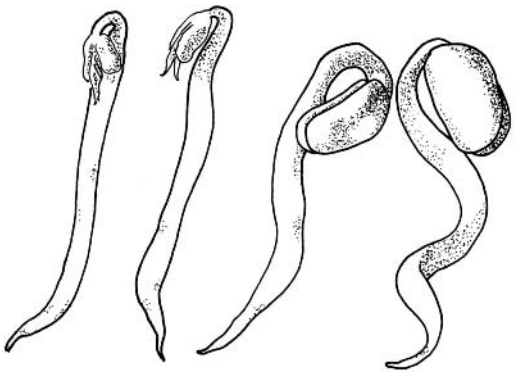
- Staples: rice, wheat noodles, soybean products.
- Barley, millet, buckwheat, maize, potato.
- Beef, pork, chicken, fish, seafood (clams, oysters, octopus).
- Vegetables: fresh and pickled Chinese cabbage, turnips, garlic, cucumber, soybean (including sprouts), mung bean, red bean, dried or fresh wild vegetables, mushrooms, gingko nuts, day lily buds, water chestnut, eggplant, pumpkin, assorted gourds, sweet potato, assorted seaweed.
- Fruits: persimmon, apple, Asian pear, plum, peach, citrus (mandarin, clementine).
- Seasonings: chilies, garlic, green onions, sesame oil; soy sauce, soybean paste (*doenjang*).

Typical Dishes

- Stews (*chige*, also spelled *jjigae*) of meat or fish or soybean curd and seasonal vegetables such as zucchini, spinach, carrots. The most popular stew (*doenjang jjigae*) is flavored with soybean paste and is claimed as the national dish. Barbecued meats, marinated in chilies, garlic, green onions, and sesame oil, grilled at the table.
- Japanese-style dishes: noodles in soup (*udong*), seaweed rolls (*gimbap*), raw fish.
- Chinese-style stir-fried dishes of meat and vegetables.
- Salads (*namul*) of soy bean sprouts and reconstituted wild vegetables.
- Drinks: green tea, ginseng tea, rice wine (*takju*), rice liquor (*soju*), coffee, bottled fruit and carbonated drinks. Ginseng tea is consumed frequently for health.

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals daily, and snacks. North Koreans suffer from hunger and malnutrition in many cases, and rarely eat as much.
- Traditional meals are eaten with metal utensils (bowl, chopsticks, and spoon). Unlike in China and Japan, the rice bowl is not raised to the lips: rice is eaten with a spoon.



SOYBEAN AND MUNGBEAN SPROUTS

- *Kimchi* (peppery pickled vegetables), most commonly of Chinese cabbage, accompany every meal.
- Breakfast: rice, pickles, soup of beef ribs or fish, ginseng or barley tea; savory pancake with vegetables (*pajyong*); rice porridge (*juk*) with egg, fish, or meat.
- Lunch: stew (*jjigae*) of meat or seafood or *tubu* (soybean curd) with vegetables, pickles, rice, barley or ginseng tea.
- Dinner: grilled meat or fish, rice, pickles, seasoned vegetables (*namul*), tea.
- Snacks: traditional cakes (*deok*) of rice flour, millet, and other grains stuffed with red beans, persimmon, and other fruits for sweet types, and made with garlic chives and egg for savory type; Western cakes with coffee; street snacks of sausage (*sundae*), wheat noodles in anchovy soup (*guksu*), or *kimbap* (rolls of rice and shredded vegetables wrapped in seaweed, similar to Japanese *sushi* rolls, but not quite so).
- There are many types of eating venues, from itinerant peddlers and street stalls to Korean and international food restaurants, including multinational fast food chains. Little dishes of assorted accompaniments (*banchan*), for example, fresh shucked oysters, stir-fried anchovies, garlic-chive fritters, and seasoned vegetables (*namul*), come with restaurant meals, the number depending on the type (and price) of food. Pickles are a subset of *banchan*.

Barbecued Short Ribs (Kalbi-gui, *also* Galbi-gui)

Kalbi-gui are marinated overnight, usually in sesame oil, soy sauce, garlic, sugar, green onions, ginger, and other spices. Rice wine may be added for flavor

KIMCHEE

Koreans pride themselves on their *kimchee* (pickles). Pickles are so important for the Korean diet that there is a *kimchee* museum in Seoul, celebrating the thousands of varieties. *Kimchee* is made from firm vegetables—Chinese cabbage and various radishes are favorites—well flavored with salt and chilies, and there are many local variants. Other ingredients such as dried shrimp or fish are often added. In traditional Korea, *kimchee* was made in late summer. The pickles were placed in large (2–3 feet long) black glazed jars, which were well sealed and placed in an area with constant light warmth. In many rural areas it was usual, until the late 1970s, to see several *kimchee* jars half-buried in compost heaps in every yard.

and as tenderizer. The marinated meat is cooked at the table on a metal grid over a burner; traditionally, this was a clay burner with charcoal. Each diner picks a piece of cooked beef with metal chopsticks, and wraps it in a fresh lettuce leaf together with a bit of rice, pickled or fresh vegetables, or any other garnish laid out on little bowls on the table. If pork is used, the dish is called *dwaeji kalbi-gui*. This dish is for an evening meal. Serve accompanied by plain rice, pickled vegetables (*kimchee*), a vegetable salad (*namul*), and soup (see box "Kimchee").

1½ pounds beef or pork short ribs, about 2–2½ inches long
2 tsp water
2 tsp scallion, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
3 tsp thick soy sauce
1 tsp sesame oil
1 TBS black bean paste
1 tsp sugar
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
½ TBS ginger, grated
1½ tsp brown sugar
1 tsp sesame seed, toasted
1 tsp oil

Combine all ingredients and allow beef to marinate overnight, refrigerated.
Broil over very hot charcoal or under very hot grill.
Serve with white rice and dipping sauce on the side.

Dipping Sauce

chili sauce to taste
salt to taste
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp sesame seed, toasted
1 tsp scallions, minced fine
1 tsp sesame oil

Combine all ingredients about 1 hour before use.

Noodles and Beef (Chapjae, *also* Japchae)

A dish commonly served at parties and special occasions, *chapjae* can be made with any type of vegetable in season. Vegetables are fried separately in a small amount of oil. Instead of ground beef, strips of beef, pork, or chicken can be used.

3 TBS vegetable oil
½ pound ground beef
½ pound cellophane noodles (available in Oriental stores), soaked in cold water for 10 minutes
boiling water to cover noodles
½ bunch spinach (about 1 cup when cooked)
6 *shiitake* mushrooms, fresh or dried and soaked for 10 minutes in hot water, woody stem end removed and discarded, chopped fine
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and cut into julienne strips
1 TBS sesame seeds
1 TBS sesame oil
¼ cup soy sauce
1 TBS brown sugar
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste

Heat 1 TBS oil in a wok. Brown meat. Set aside.
Blanch noodles in boiling water for about 2–3 minutes. Rinse in cold water immediately and drain.
Blanch spinach quickly in boiling water. Plunge immediately in cold water to keep color. Drain and chop roughly.
Heat remaining oil and stir-fry mushrooms, onion, and carrot until almost tender.
Stir in meat, spinach, and noodles, frying briefly.
Add sesame seeds, sesame oil, soy sauce, sugar, and garlic.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot.

Vegetable and Beef Rice Bowl
(Bibimbap)

Bibimbap is a one-dish meal of rice mixed with assorted vegetables, usually served with pickles and soup, and a dollop of hot pepper sauce (*chojang*).

2 carrots, cut into julienne strips
2 zucchini, cut into julienne strips
2 cups soybean or mung bean sprouts, rinsed and drained
6 dried *shiitake* mushrooms, presoaked in hot water, drained, woody stems discarded, and sliced
salt and cayenne pepper to taste
2 cups spinach, blanched, then plunged into cold water, drained
1 cup icicle radish (*daikon*), cut into julienne strips
4 cups cooked rice (this can be all white rice, or two-thirds rice cooked with one-third barley)
1 pound beef, ground or thinly sliced
2 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS sesame oil
1 tsp sugar
about ¼ cup vegetable oil for frying
4 eggs

Put vegetables into separate bowls. Season with salt and cayenne pepper to taste. Allow to rest for 5 minutes, then drain and discard excess liquid.
Mix soy sauce, sesame oil, and sugar in a bowl. Marinate meat for 5 minutes in this mixture.
Heat 1 TBS oil in a wok. Brown meat. Set aside.
Using 1 TBS oil each time, stir-fry vegetables separately, except spinach and radish. Set aside.
Divide hot cooked rice into four individual bowls.
Arrange vegetables and beef over the rice in pie-shaped wedges, radiating around an empty space in the center to make room for the egg.
Heat oil.
Fry eggs (sunny side up) to desired state; lightly season with salt.
Place egg in the center, surrounded by the vegetables.
Serve with vinegar and *chojang*.

Vinegar and Hot Pepper Sauce (Chojang)

Koreans adore the bite of strong hot peppers. *Chojang* is almost always present on the table as a relish at any meal.

5 TBS hot (peppery) soybean paste (*kochujang*, available from Korean stores, or substitute a hot soybean paste available from Chinese stores)
2 TBS brown-colored rice vinegar (available also in Chinese food stores)
1½ tsp sugar
½ tsp sesame oil

Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
Adjust seasoning to your liking.
Serve with any one-bowl rice dish.

Cucumber Salad (Oi Namul)

Namul are salads of fresh seasonal vegetables, or reconstituted dried wild vegetables such as fern fronds or bellflower roots, which are usual relishes for a meal. They are flavored with salt or hot soybean paste (*gochujang*), toasted sesame seeds, sesame oil, vinegar, green onions, and garlic.

3 cucumbers, each 4–5 inches long (Asian variety preferable), sliced into thin rounds
1 TBS salt
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp toasted sesame seeds (to toast: dry fry in a skillet over

(*continued*)

low heat until the seeds start to "jump")
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
a pinch of sugar
1 tsp sesame oil

Sprinkle salt over cucumber slices, mix well, and let stand for 30 minutes.
Place the cucumbers in a damp cloth and gently squeeze out liquid.
Toss with rest of ingredients, adding sesame oil last.

Three-Color Dumplings (Samsaekchuak)

Red, green, and white are the Korean national colors. Three-color dumplings are served during festivals and sometimes offered at temples. These sweet dumplings are served as a snack with ginseng, green, or barley tea.

4 cups glutinous rice flour (available from Oriental stores)
1 TBS salt
20 dried Chinese dates (jujubes; available from Chinese stores, or substitute small dried dates), pitted and chopped fine
2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp honey
1 or 2 drops food coloring (red, green), each dissolved separately in 1 TBS water
oil for deep-frying
½ cup honey dissolved in equivalent hot water

Divide rice flour into three equal parts.
Add food coloring separately to two of the three parts and mix well.
Gradually add hot water and knead each of them into a smooth, elastic dough.
Mix jujubes with 1 teaspoon honey and cinnamon to make the filling.
Shape the dough into dumplings about the size of a golf ball.
Make a cavity in each ball with a finger. Insert ½ teaspoon of filling and seal well, smoothing dough over the opening.
Heat oil to 340°F in a deep pot or a wok. Deep-fry dumplings until crisp and golden brown in color. Drain off excess oil on paper towels or a rack.
While dumplings are still hot, soak in honey-water.
To serve, arrange in a pyramid on a serving plate. Serve warm with tea.

KURDISTAN

The Kurds are a Middle Eastern people speaking an Indo-Aryan language related to Persian. Largely farmers and to a lesser extent nomads, some 25 to 40 million Kurds live at the conflux of the borders of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and particularly Turkey, where they are the majority people in the eastern third of the country. The area largely populated by Kurds is about 74,000 square miles, though the country is not a recognized national or international entity.

Due to the Kurds' intermingling with other populations, many of their dishes are claimed by other countries (Turkey, Syria, Iraq, or Iran). The Kurds identify certain dishes as typically theirs, though many of those are likely adaptations or borrowings from their neighbors.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, *bulghur* (cracked wheat), flat breads baked on the sides of a *tabun* (circular oven), vegetables, plain yogurt, cheese.
- Vegetables: squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, peppers, eggplant, and greens.
- Fruit: watermelons, melons, figs, grapes, apricots, pomegranates.
- Flavoring: pepper, cumin, and garlic are common spices; hot peppers are used sparingly.

Typical Dishes

- *Mezes* (appetizers) and salads: marinated lamb liver fried in olive oil, served with onions and parsley (*ciger*); chopped onion, tomatoes, red peppers, cucumber, and mint (*ezme*); grilled eggplant with cultured yogurt and garlic (*alinazik*); green beans with olive oil, tomatoes, and onions (*sholik*); *bulghur* and vegetables (*kisir*); lamb kidneys with feta cheese, tomato paste (*gurchuk*); fried eggplant with green pepper, baby marrow, and garlic yogurt (*kizartma*); eggplant stuffed with vegetables served with salads (*badiljane tijikiri*); *bulghur* with mushrooms (*savare kariya*); lamb hearts stuffed with rice, meat, raisins, walnuts, and pine nuts in a curried apricot sauce (*giri-giri*).
- Soups: rice and yogurt soup sprinkled with dried mint (*yayla*); meat-stuffed *bulghur* dumplings in a sour soup (*kubbeh khamoustah*).

- Meat dishes: lamb cooked with spices, served with garlic yogurt (*haran*); spicy lamb with green peppers and onion in a tomato and garlic sauce wrapped in flat bread (*serok*); lamb with vegetables grilled on skewers (*sikh kebab*); lamb ribs cooked with pickled onions (*yagni*); sweet and sour chicken with herbs (*zozan*).
- The star of Kurdish cooking is *kubbeh* (also *kibbeh*). These *bulghur* dumplings are made in many ways, and are served in soups (red on the basis of tomatoes, or green on the basis of sour herbs), on their own, and with many different kinds of fillings. *Kubbeh* soup is a meal in itself.
- Sweet dishes: dates and nuts rolled in phyllo pastry served with ice cream or yogurt (*hurma sarma*); syrup-cooked pumpkin (*sirini*); apricots stuffed with cream and almonds (*kaysi dolma*); baked rice pudding flavored with sugar and cinnamon (*sutlatch*).
- Tea is sweetened traditionally by a sugar cube held under the tongue while sipping.

Styles of Eating

- Kurds in the towns eat three meals a day and snacks. Country people might eat only once or twice a day.
- Traditional dining is around dishes on a carpet, with everyone helping themselves to what takes their fancy. All foods are served together.
- Breakfast: bread, yogurt, or *laban*, tea or coffee.
- Lunch and dinner: main dishes such as *kubbeh*; salads; a sweet; tea or coffee. For guests, the same meal will be made more elaborate with several kinds of *kubbeh*, meat, rice, and whatever the household can afford.

Chickpea Salad

This is served at any meal as a salad.

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 TBS toasted cumin seeds
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
½ inch fresh ginger, grated
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
⅛ tsp cayenne pepper
2 TBS fresh lime juice
1 large tomato, diced
2 cups canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*), rinsed and drained (or substitute black beans, kidney beans, or white beans)
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

Heat oil in a pan and add cumin seeds; cook just till fragrant.
Add onion and garlic and sauté until onion is tender.
Add ginger, salt, pepper, cayenne, lime juice, tomato, and chickpeas, and simmer for 5 minutes or until hot.
Serve salad hot, garnished with chopped cilantro.

Okra and Stuffed Bulghur (Kubbeh Bamya, *also* Kibbeh Bamya)

Kubbeh appear in many forms. This dish would be served either as part of the appetizers, or as a main dish.

1 large onion, minced fine
salt to taste
1 pound ground meat (mutton preferably, or beef)
1 TBS mixed cumin and cardamom powder
1 pound fine *bulghur* or semolina, rinsed and drained
½ pound plain flour
2 tsp oil
1 tsp salt
2 TBS oil
1 TBS garlic, crushed
1 ripe tomato, chopped
1 pound okra, cut for more glutinous consistency, whole for less
2 TBS tomato paste
½ TBS sugar
¼ cup lemon juice, strained

Make the filling: season onion with salt and let stand for 10 minutes.
Squeeze to remove excess juice. Add meat and spices.
Mix thoroughly with moistened hands or in a food processor.
Make the shells: place *bulghur,* flour, oil, and salt in a bowl. Knead the mixture vigorously or pound in a mortar and pestle for about 15–20 minutes until pasty. Alternatively, blend in a food processor until smooth.
Divide the mixture into twelve portions.
With moistened fingers, roll each into a lemon shape.
To fill the kubbeh: take one in the palm of your moistened left hand.
Create a long, narrow cavity in the kubbeh with one finger, while turning the shell around with your left hand. Try not to pierce through to the exterior, but if this happens, simply moisten a finger and smooth out the crack.
Carefully push in 1 tablespoon of the meat mixture into the cavity.
Seal the cavity closed, and taper the ends gently.
Lay each *kubbeh* aside carefully.
Heat oil. Sauté garlic for 1 minute over low heat.
Add tomato and okra. Cook for 10–15 minutes until softened.
Add tomato paste and 1 cup water. Raise heat to medium and bring to a boil.
Add lemon juice, sugar, and salt to taste. Simmer for 10 minutes.
Keep the sauce simmering and carefully slip in the *kubbeh*.
Cover and gently simmer for 15–20 minutes.
Serve for the main meal.

Pine Nut–Stuffed Bulghur *Dumplings* (Kubbeh Mahsh, *also* Kibbeh Mahshi)

Though claimed by many in the Middle East, this is considered by Kurds to be their national dish. It is said that a Kurdish woman cannot be married until she

can prepare *kubbeh* properly. The end product must be firm, the exterior crisp but not dry. *Kubbeh* can be served as the main dish or as appetizers.

2 cups *bulghur* (cracked wheat)
1 pound lamb, finely minced
1 large onion, peeled and finely minced
salt and black pepper to taste
¼ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1 tsp cinnamon powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
3 ounces pine nuts
vegetable oil for deep-frying

Soak *bulghur* in cold water for 10 minutes, then squeeze out and mix with meat, onion, spices, and seasonings.
Pound ingredients until thoroughly pasty (traditional), or run through a food processor. The result should be a firm paste.
Wet both hands, then take a small lump of the mixture (about the size of a medium egg) and form it around your forefinger to an even thickness all over. The result should be the shape of a short sausage (moisten if necessary and smooth over all cracks).
Fill each shell loosely with about 1 teaspoon of pine nuts.
Smooth the ends to seal.
Heat oil in a deep pan to moderate heat, then carefully slip in two or three shells and fry for about 5 minutes, until browned and crisp all over. Do not cook more than two or three at a time to avoid sticking and cracking.
Drain thoroughly and serve hot or cold with salad and yogurt.
Serve as appetizer in a *meze* or as main dish.

Pumpkin in Syrup (Shirini)

This is a frequently made sweet.

1½ cups sugar
1 cup water
1 pound pumpkin, washed, seeded, peeled, and cut into large chunks
1 cup chopped walnut meats

Simmer the sugar and water until sugar is completely dissolved and syrup is slightly thickened.
Add the pumpkin pieces and gently cook, without stirring, until the syrup is almost completely absorbed and the pumpkin is tender, about 20–25 minutes. Watch carefully to ensure the pumpkin does not burn.
Arrange the cooked pumpkin on a plate and garnish with walnuts.
Serve with thick yogurt as a snack.

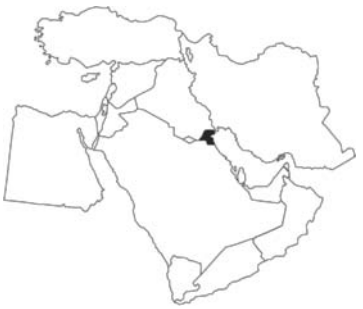
Kurdish Tea (Chai Kurdi)

Like many Middle Eastern societies, the Kurds are very fond of sweet things, accompanied by tea. Tea is an important part of hospitality.

1 TBS tea leaves
1 4-inch cinnamon stick
2 cups boiling water
8 sugar cubes

Pour boiling water over tea and cinnamon in a teapot.
Steep for 5 minutes.
Pour into small glasses (or cups) about ½ cup in volume.
Place a sugar cube between your teeth.
Sip the hot tea through the sugar cube.
Repeat for a second glass.

KUWAIT



Kuwait is a kingdom in the Middle East, on the shores of the Persian Gulf, sandwiched between Iraq and Saudi Arabia. It is slightly smaller than New Jersey. It has intensely hot and humid summers and short, cool winters. Much of the land is flat and arid.

Kuwait being a Muslim nation, Eid-el-Adha (Abraham's Sacrifice), Eid-el-Fitr (End of Ramadan), and Muharram (Muslim New Year) are celebrated. Kuwait enjoys a high standard of living due to the income from petroleum. Virtually all foods are imported. Large number of non-Kuwaitis, mainly from the Indian subcontinent, have brought an Indian influence to the cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Rice, breads of wheat flour are the popular staples.
- Seafood of all kinds is very common.
- Preferred meats are lamb and camel calf.
- Dates are popular, both grown locally and imported from Iraq.

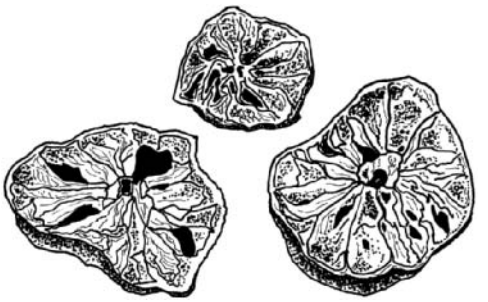
Typical Dishes

- Deep-fried, baked, and mixed dishes of vegetables and meat cooked with rice are popular.
- *Mechbous*, a spiced mixture of rice and chicken; seafood cooked with rice; grilled fish.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and many snacks are currently eaten, though in the past most people ate only in the morning and late afternoon.
- Traditional meals are eaten by the entire family sitting around a common dish of rice and meat or vegetables, eaten with the right hand only. Western dining with individual place settings and cutlery is common when eating out. Male and female guests eat separately.
- Breakfast: Western-style breakfasts including cereals and bread are becoming popular. Older people still eat bread dipped in oil, with coffee or tea.

- Lunch and dinner are similar, though the evening meal is likely to be heavier. Often the main meal is a rice dish mixed with meat, chicken, or fish.
- The evening meal during the month of fasting, Ramadan, tends to be lavish, with many dishes served, particularly sweet foods.
- Coffee and tea are drunk throughout the day, often accompanied by sweet pastries.



DRIED LIME (LOOMI)

Chicken on Rice (Mechbous)

This is a characteristic dish for a main meal.

1 small whole chicken, cut into serving portions, rinsed and patted dry
salt
1 cinnamon stick
2 cardamom pods
3 whole cloves
5 black peppercorns, whole
3 cups short-grained rice
water as needed
flour as needed
oil for shallow frying

Onion-Spice Topping (Hashu)

2–3 TBS vegetable oil
2 large yellow onions, finely chopped
¼ cup seedless raisins, soaked in water and drained
¼ tsp ground cardamom
½ tsp ground *loomi* (dried lime, available from some Middle Eastern stores. Or substitute grated lime rind)
¼ tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp sugar

Tomato Sauce (Duqqus)

2 large tomatoes, chopped
2 TBS water
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 TBS tomato paste
salt, pepper to taste

Place chicken and spices in a stockpot with enough water to cover.
Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and continue to simmer uncovered over medium heat until chicken is done but still firm (approximately 30 minutes).
Remove and drain the chicken, reserving broth.
Chill broth and skim off congealed fat. Strain to remove spices and other particles.
Prepare three cups of rice, with broth from the chicken topped up with water to make 6 cups, if necessary. Add a pinch of salt.
While rice is cooking, prepare the onion topping.
Heat oil over medium heat in a frying pan and stir fry onions until brown and almost caramelized.
Stir in raisins and spices. Cook for 1 minute. Remove mixture from pan and set aside.

(*continued*)

Make the tomato sauce: in the same frying pan, put chopped tomatoes, water, garlic, tomato paste, salt, and pepper to simmer until tomatoes are soft and the sauce well blended. Set aside.
Lightly dust the boiled, drained chicken with flour. Heat oil in a clean frying pan and shallow fry the the chicken over medium-high heat, turning frequently, until brown and crispy.
When the rice is done, spread it on a serving platter. Sprinkle the onion mixture over the rice and place the chicken on top. Place the tomato sauce in a bowl on the table for diners to help themselves.

Shrimp Stew (Murabyan)

Fish and seafood are popular foods. This is served for a main meal.

Main Dish

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp powdered coriander
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
¼ tsp black pepper
2 pounds peeled and deveined shrimp (medium size)
1 pound tomatoes, chopped roughly
1 tsp salt
4 cups water
4 cups short-grained rice, rinsed and drained

Topping

2 onions, thinly sliced
¼ cup vegetable oil
½ tsp ground cardamom
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp ground turmeric
¼ tsp ground cloves
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
grated peel of 1 *loomi* (dried lime; or substitute fresh grated lime rind)
1 clove garlic, mashed with 1 tsp ground coriander
1 pound peeled deveined shrimp

Heat oil over medium heat.
Add sliced onions and sauté until golden.
Add garlic, coriander, ginger, and pepper.
Stir in shrimp and sauté for 2–3 minutes.
Add tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes until softened.
Add salt and water, and bring to a boil.
Stir in rice.
Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until all the water is absorbed, about 15–20 minutes.
Remove from heat and set aside.
Now prepare the topping. Sauté onions in oil until golden.
Add the cardamom, black pepper, curry powder, turmeric, cloves, cilantro, grated *loomi*, and garlic/coriander mixture. Mix well.

Add shrimp and sauté until cooked through (about 5 minutes).
To serve, mound the rice and shrimp mixture on a platter.
Ladle the shrimp topping over the rice.

Black-Eyed Peas in Tomato Broth

This is a side dish commonly eaten at lunchtime.

1 large onion, chopped
3 TBS olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ pound lamb, cut into small cubes (or minced meat)
salt and black pepper to taste
1 cup dried black-eyed peas, soaked in boiling water for at least an hour, or overnight, drained (or use 2 cups canned)
4 stalks celery, sliced crosswise
2 ripe tomatoes, chopped
6 cups water
1 tsp tomato paste
½ tsp chili powder

Sauté onion in olive oil on medium heat until translucent.
Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute.
Increase the heat and add the lamb and seasoning to taste. Sauté until browned.
Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil.
Cover and simmer for 30–45 minutes, until the meat and the peas are tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve over rice.

Tea (Chai)

Hot, strong, sweet tea is drunk at any time of the day, and is an essential component of any hospitality. It is often served in small, thick-walled glasses.

6 cups water
4 cinnamon sticks
5 TBS tea leaves or 5 tea bags
2 tsp sugar

In a small pot combine water and cinnamon.
Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 10–15 minutes.
Remove the cinnamon sticks.
Stir in tea leaves and sugar.
Boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat.
Pour into small teacups (the traditional ones used are without handles) and serve.

Tahina *and Date Syrup Dip* (Dibis wa' Rashi)

Traditionally, this would be eaten for breakfast. Nowadays it is served as an appetizer.

½ cup date syrup (available from Indian and Middle Eastern stores, or puree pitted dates with ½ cup warm water in a food processor)
1 TBS *tahina*
1 TBS fresh lemon juice, or to taste

Blend all the ingredients together in a bowl.
Serve as an appetizer with flat bread.

Sponge Cake

This is a popular cake that may have been borrowed from the British. Served as a snack with tea.

2 eggs
6 threads saffron, soaked in 1 tsp warm water for 5 minutes
¾ cup sugar
¾ cup flour
½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp cardamom powder
1 TBS butter for greasing the pan
1 tsp sesame seeds

Beat eggs well in a large bowl.
Add saffron.
Gradually beat in sugar.
Sift flour with baking powder and cardamom.
Add to eggs and mix thoroughly.
Pour mixture into a well-buttered 8-inch baking pan.
Sprinkle with sesame seeds.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 20 minutes.

KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan is a large central Asian country, consisting mainly of wide steppes. The northeast is a mass of rough mountain ranges. The climate is hot in the summer (except in the higher altitudes) and very cold in the winter.

Kyrgyztan is largely settled by the forty tribes of the Kyrgyz, a Turkic-speaking people who also live in other countries of Central and East Asia. Most are currently Muslims and are forbidden alcohol and pork.

The Kyrgyz being traditionally nomads, their favorite food is meat, and cooking is simple. Chinese and Western (Russian) influences are changing the cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Meat is primary, preferably fat-tailed sheep, horsemeat, and beef.
- Flour noodles.
- Carrots and squashes; rice and wheat flour; onions and garlic; chilies.

Typical Dishes

- Noodles and stuffed dumplings (*manty*) are staples for all meals.
- *Beshbarmak*, mutton-on-the-bone, is the classic Kyrgyz dish for guests.
- *Kesme* (noodle soup) is eaten at any meal.
- Tea, both black and green, is the common drink.

Styles of Eating

- Currently, three meals a day and snacks. Traditionally, the main heavy meal of meat and dumplings was eaten in the evening.
- Traditional dining involves a central dish or pot from which everyone is served in individual bowls. Diners sit on a ground cloth or carpet around the pot. Spoons are provided, though solids such as meat are eaten by hand. Men are served separately and first, women and children later.
- Other meals are usually breads or noodles with whatever vegetables are available, cheese, and a great deal of tea.
- Appreciation is expressed by burping loudly at the end of a meal. Hosts like to see that guests eat a lot, and considered themselves insulted if guests eat only small quantities.

Mutton-on-the-Bone (Beshbarmak)

Beshbarmak means "five fingers" in Kyrgyz. It is traditionally eaten with the five fingers of the right hand, hence the name. This is a simple dish offered to important guests. To recreate this dish for 4 diners, use 2–3 pounds stewing lamb on the bone, 2 onions, 5 cloves garlic, and 2 pounds fresh noodles, and follow the procedure given below.

1 fat-tailed sheep
salt to taste
4 large onions
1 garlic bulb, separated, cloves peeled
about ½–⅔ pound fresh flour noodles per person

Upon the guests' arrival, a fat-tailed sheep is slaughtered.
The sheep carcass is skinned and cut up, then set to cook (cleaned small intestines, liver, all the variety meats, and head are included) in a large cauldron with salt, onions, garlic, and water to cover.
When the meat is tender, after about 1 hour or so, the noodles are added to boil with the meat in the same stock.
To serve, the meat and noodles are placed in separate bowls and placed on the ground cloth (eating is customarily done sitting around the ground cloth).
Some of the meat is shredded to facilititate eating, and mounded in a bowl.
The head, intestines, and other internal organs are brought on a separate tray. The guest of honor is offered the eyes.
Noodles and broth are served to each diner in a bowl. Diners help themselves to the meat, to be eaten with the noodles with the fingers. The broth is sipped directly from the side of the bowl.

Noodle Soup (Kesme)

Kesme is the Kyrgyz national dish. The meat and fat are supposed to come from the fat-tailed sheep common in the area.

2 ounces mutton fat (from tail preferably), cut into thin strips
1½ pounds lamb or mutton, cut into strips
1 large onion, sliced
½ pound radish, cut into julienne strips
2 ounces tomato paste
2 cubes beef bouillon dissolved in 4 cups hot water
5 ounces flour
2 eggs, beaten
5 ounces water
salt and black pepper to taste
1 ounce garlic, minced

Heat the fat over low heat in a heavy covered pot to render the oil. When sizzling, add the meat. Brown on all sides.
Add onion and radish and stir-fry until softened.

Add tomato paste and bouillon; cover the pot and simmer for 30–45 minutes until the meat is tender.
Meanwhile, prepare a dough: blend the flour and eggs in a food processor. Add water a little at a time, mixing until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough and knead on a floured surface for 10 minutes until shiny and elastic.
Roll dough out to ¼-inch thickness.
Cut into strips about ½-inch wide.
Add noodles to simmering soup (add more stock if necessary). Cook for 5 minutes.
Season to taste.
Place in tureen and sprinkle with garlic.
Serve hot.

Mutton Soup (Shorpo)

This is served as a main dish with *manty* (dumplings).

1 pound stewing lamb
salt and pepper to taste
5 ounces mutton fat or butter
¼ pound onion, sliced
½ pound tomatoes, chopped
6 cups water
1 pound potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
1 cup greens (spring onions, shallots, parsley, cress, or spinach—as desired), finely minced

Rub the meat thoroughly with salt and pepper.
Render the mutton fat over low heat in a heavy covered pot.
Brown the seasoned meat in hot fat.
Add onion and tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes over high heat.
Add water and potatoes. Bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes or more, covered, until meat is tender.
Serve in individual bowls, hot, garnishing each bowl with greens.

Kyrgyz Tea (Atkanchay)

Atkanchay is normally served with flat bread. It is consumed after meals or at any time during the day.

2 cups water
1 ounce tea leaves
2 cups milk
1 ounce butter
5 ounces sour cream
salt to taste

(*continued*)

Boil the water and add tea. Simmer briefly.
Add milk, bring to a boil.
Add butter, salt, and sour cream. Stir and bring back to a boil.
Strain into cups to serve.

Baked Beef

Though mutton is the favorite meat in Kyrgyzstan, beef is also consumed. This dish betrays the influence of its Central Asian neighbors, as it is far more complex than most nomadic dishes.

3 TBS butter
1 large onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 pound beef, cut into ½-inch cubes
1 cup yogurt
2 apples, diced
1 cup dried apricots, diced
½ cup raisins
½ cup jujubes (Chinese dates, available from Chinese stores or substitute dried dates), pitted and diced
2 tsp curry powder
1 tsp salt
2 tsp black pepper

Heat oven to 350°F.
Heat butter in a heavy skillet. Sauté onion until translucent. Add green pepper.
Add beef and sauté until it changes color.
Add yogurt, fruit, curry powder, salt, and pepper; mix well.
Place in a large, deep casserole.
Bake for 45 minutes or until beef is tender.
Serve with steamed rice.

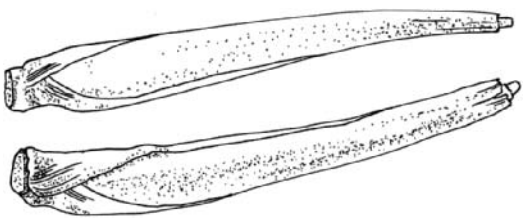
LAOS

A small landlocked Southeast Asian country, Laos was a French colony that became independent in 1946. It is one of a few remaining Communist countries. Mostly mountainous and thickly forested, arable land is scarce. The climate is tropical, enabling sugarcane, rice, fruits, vegetables, and livestock to be raised. Fresh-water fish and crustaceans are a major food resource.

The population is predominantly Lao, who speak a language similar to Thai. Minority ethnic groups include Hmong, Liao, Meo, and others. Most are Buddhists who eschew excessive meat eating. Laotian cuisine is spice- and herb-based, influenced by neighboring Thailand, China, and France. Presentation of foods, with regard to color and texture, is very important. Laotian food is distinguished from that of its neighbors (Vietnam and Thailand) by preference for sticky glutinous rice as the staple.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: sticky rice, fish, greens.
- Rice and bean noodles.
- Water buffalo and pork (internal organs, feet, and skin), chicken, beef, eggs, wild game (python, deer, civet), preserved meat (meat and blood sausage, cured meat).
- Assorted leafy vegetables, corn, cassava, various types of eggplant, white radish, cucumber, sweet potato, green (unripe) papaya, unripe mango, bamboo shoots, banana blossom, mushrooms, riverweed—fresh-water "seaweed," called *kai-pen*. Unusual vegetables such as rattan shoots, taro leaf stalks, and morning glory shoots.
- Banana, citrus (tangerines), berries, peanuts, papaya, mango.
- Seasonings: *galangal* (a ginger relative), chunky fresh-water fish sauce (*padek*) (see box "Fish Sauce"), mint, dill, chili, ginger flower bud, large-leaf cilantro, cilantro. Table condiments of hot chili, vinegar or lime juice, fish sauce, and herbs.
- Drinks: beverages, including water, are not drunk during meals. Locally grown tea and coffee are drunk at breaks; coffee is usually



LEMON GRASS

instant with condensed milk and is drunk in a glass. When coffee is finished, weak tea or water is drunk as a chaser; rice wine (*lao hai*), pink rice wine (*kao kham*), rice liquor (*laolao*), fresh fruit juices, bottled fruit drinks, carbonated fruit drinks, locally brewed beer.

Typical Dishes

- Marinated meat and/or fish, sometimes raw, with assorted greens, herbs, and spices (*laap*), is considered the national dish.
- Charcoal-grilled meat, duck or chicken.
- Dry, thick meat curries and stews (dry consistency because fingers are used for eating).
- Water buffalo meat and skin in sausages, stews, and sauces.
- Raw or parboiled or steamed vegetables, bitter- and astringent-tasting vegetables, such as marble-sized eggplant. Flavoring includes fish sauce and various herbs and chilies.
- Banana leaf–wrapped and steamed dishes: meat or fish and herbs (*knap*, also spelled *kanab*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- In traditional dining, a basket of sticky rice is placed between diners. Each diner uses the fingers of the right hand to take a small amount of rice, to be dipped into sauce or the many small bowls of communal dishes placed on the table (chopsticks are used for Vietnamese and Chinese noodle dishes; fork and spoon for regular rice dishes). Edible leaves (mint, lettuce) are also used to wrap morsels of rice, vegetables, and meat, to be dipped into sauce, and eaten, leaves and all. It is customary to defer to older people before eating: oldest persons take the first bites, followed by others in descending order of age. After this, everyone eats freely. It is considered impolite not to replace the cover on the sticky rice basket.
- Breakfast: croissant or baguette dipped into coffee; rice porridge; savory pancake with green herbs and vegetables from street stalls.

FISH SAUCE

A number of fish-derived sauces, or oils, are used throughout the world—notably in Southeast Asia—as flavoring agents. These include *nuoc mam* (Vietnam), *nampla* (Thailand), *patis* (Philippines), *fafaru* (Tahiti), and *shottsuru* (Japan), and others. These sauces are made commercially, for the most part, by fermenting small fish (sometimes small shrimp or squid) with large quantities of salt. The liquid, which is a mixture of oils and fermented essences, is then drawn off.

The specific methods differ from one place to another. The tastes do, too, at least for those familiar with them. To the uninitiated the sauces can all taste rather similar and rather strong (though they can become addictive in time).

The various sauces are available at Asian stores. The best way is to try different ones until you find one or more you like. It is rare to find the Japanese version, called *shottsuru* (popular until the introduction of soy sauce in the sixteenth century); and the secret of making *garum* (the ancient Roman version, once popular throughout the Mediterranean world) is lost.

- Lunch: rice with typical side dishes such as fermented pork sausage (*som moo*), green papaya salad, and marinated meat or fish (*laap*); fresh fruit.
- Dinner: sticky rice and several dishes: soup, grilled dish, dipping sauce, greens, stew or mixed dish (*koy* or *laap*), fresh fruit.
- Snacks: unripe mango eaten with vinegar and chilies; noodle soup with greens (*foe*); French-influenced baguette sandwich with paté or meat loaf and greens; Vietnamese-influenced spring rolls with greens and herbs.

GLUTINOUS (STICKY) RICE IN ASIA

Rice varies extensively in the quantity of starch in the kernel. This is exploited by farmers and cooks since different amounts of starch affect the finished product in different ways. "Sticky" or glutinous rice refers to the type of rice in which the kernel has high amounts of amylopectin (a component of starch), which makes the kernels stick to one another. In Laos and northeastern Thailand this type of rice, eaten by hand, is the major staple. In these areas the quality of rice is assessed partly by the degree to which it holds together to allow a diner to scoop sauces or other foods to the mouth, using the rice ball as a scoop.

Glutinous rice is used in a wider geographical zone—from Southeast Asia to China and Japan—to make pounded rice cakes. In this case, the cooked rice grains are pounded to make a sticky, chewy dough-like substance (similar in consistency to chewing gum), which is the basis for many types of steamed or shaped cakes. Since the pounded glutinous rice absorbs flavors and colors easily, it serves in a somewhat analogous role to marzipan in Europe: to make interesting shapes or emulate fruit and other food items.

Sticky Rice (Khao Neow)

Khao Neow is the Laotian staple, served at all main meals (see box "Glutinous [Sticky] Rice in Asia").

2 cups sticky rice (also called sweet or glutinous rice in Oriental stores)
4 (or more) cups water for soaking rice
water for steaming
bamboo steamer (available at Oriental stores) or double boiler and colander
cheesecloth or kitchen towel

Place rice in a bowl, add water to cover by 2–3 inches.
Soak for 2 hours or overnight. The longer the rice soaks, the better the flavor.
Drain rice well; transfer to cheesecloth-lined steamer basket or colander.
Boil water in a deep pot or double boiler. The water level must be well below the bottom of the steamer. Boiling water must not touch the rice.
Set steamer basket or colander over boiling water.
Cover rice and steam for 25 or more minutes until rice is tender.
Check boiling water level and replenish as necessary with *boiling* water.
Transfer rice to a covered container, either a basket or serving bowl, breaking up lumps.

(*continued*)

Place a clean cheesecloth or kitchen towel between the lid and rice to catch any condensed liquid. Remove cloth before serving.
Serve warm.

Fish with Coconut Milk (Sousi Pa)

This dish is served with rice for a main meal.

1 pound fish fillets (fresh-water fish with firm flesh, e.g., trout, tilapia), cut into serving pieces
1 large dried chili, stem and seeds removed, soaked in hot water for 10 minutes (optional)
5 cloves garlic
3 kaffir lime leaves (optional)
1 inch fresh galangal (or l tsp dried galangal powder, also called *laos*)
2 stalks lemon grass, finely sliced
1 cup coconut milk
1½ cups diluted coconut milk (i.e., mixed with an equal quantity of warm water)
1 TBS fish sauce (*padek*, stronger tasting than *nuoc mam* or *patis*)
2 TBS peanuts, dry roasted and chopped
4 sprigs fresh basil

Blend in a food processor or blender chili, garlic, kaffir lime leaves, galangal, and lemon grass to a paste, with 1 tablespoon coconut milk.
Heat the remaining coconut milk in a saucepan for 10 minutes on low heat.
Add the paste and cook, stirring constantly.
Add fish and turn carefully in sauce.
Add diluted coconut milk and fish sauce. Simmer for 10 minutes.
Add peanuts just before end of cooking.
Serve garnished with basil.

Stir-Fried Chicken (Aioan Chua Noeung Phset Kretni)

Chicken and duck are as commonly eaten as fish; charcoal-grilled chicken and duck are often sold in the markets and street stalls for quick snacks or light meals.

6 dried *shiitake* or other large Asian mushrooms, soaked in hot water for 20 minutes
2 TBS oil
4 cloves garlic, crushed
½ tsp finely grated fresh ginger
1 small chicken, chopped into small pieces
2 tsp sugar
2 tsp cilantro, chopped

Squeeze mushrooms dry. Remove and discard stems, cut into quarters. Reserve 1 cup of water from soaking, adding water to make 1 cup if necessary.

Heat oil. Fry garlic and ginger for 10 seconds, stirring.
Add chicken and stir-fry until light golden.
Add mushrooms, reserved water, and sugar.
Cover and simmer until chicken is cooked.
Sprinkle with chopped cilantro and serve with sticky rice.

Green Papaya Salad (Tam Mak Houng)

This spicy salad is also eaten in Thailand. where it is called *som tam*. It is commonly sold in markets and street stalls. There are many variations: a few additions are ground raw rice, rice noodles, spices such as bay-leaf flavored bark, herbs such as mint or dill, and bitter green shoots. This can be eaten on its own as a snack, or with rice and other dishes for a midday or evening meal.

- 4 medium red and green serrano chilies (or to taste)
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed
- 2½ cups shredded green (unripe) papaya
- 1 cup green or string beans, cut in 1-inch pieces, blanched lightly, then cooled immediately in a bowl of ice water
- 6 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 2 TBS small dried shrimps (available from Asian stores)
- lettuce leaves
- 2 tsp peanuts, dry roasted, then roughly crushed

Pound chilies and garlic in a mortar to a coarse texture.
Add papaya, green beans, and tomatoes and mix well.
Add dried shrimps, peanuts, and dressing and toss.
Serve immediately with lettuce leaves for wrapping, sticky rice, and a meat dish.

Dressing

- 5 TBS lime juice
- 3 TBS *padek* fish sauce (or substitute other fish sauce, such as *nuoc mam* or *patis*)
- 3 TBS sugar
- 4 TBS finely ground dried shrimps

Combine the dressing ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

Vegetable Stew (or Phak)

Green vegetables and herbs of all kinds are much appreciated and are perennial accompaniments to a Laotian meal. This vegetable stew is adapted from one using dried quail and an aromatic plant called *sa-kahn*. Serve this as a side dish, accompanied by sticky rice and a meat dish.

2 cups beef jerky
½ pound pork spareribs
4 cups water
a pinch of salt
5 small eggplants (about 4–5 inches long), stalk removed
5 pea-sized eggplants, stalk removed (available from Asian greengrocers)
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded and quartered
1 green chili pepper (optional), left whole
1 stalk lemon grass
2 bay leaves, fresh preferably
3 slender (about 1 inch diameter) bamboo shoots, sliced into rings
1 sprig dill, cut into 1-inch pieces
3 spring onions, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 bunch sweet basil leaves
padek or similar fish sauce (*nam pla*, *patis*)
2 yard-long beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup crisp-fried pork skin, diced (sold at Hispanic and Oriental stores as *chicharron*)
1 cup cilantro, chopped
3 stalks spring onions, chopped, for garnish
1 cup cucumber, chopped
1 cup fresh mint leaves, left whole or watercress, chopped
5 romaine or cos lettuce leaves

Place jerky and ribs with water and salt to boil.
Simmer for 30–45 minutes until the stock is flavorful.
Add all vegetables and herbs except long beans and *padek*.
Simmer until eggplants are tender, for about 15 minutes.
Take out the eggplants and chili (if using) and process to a puree.
Return the puree to the pot; add long beans when the pot returns to a boil.
Simmer until long beans are done, for about 10 minutes.
Add the pork skin and cilantro.
Adjust seasoning, adding more fish sauce or salt if necessary.
Serve garnished with spring onions.
Eat with cucumbers, mint or watercress, and lettuce.

Sticky Rice and Mango (Khao Nieow Ma Muang)

Fruits, such as banana, mango, or papaya, are usually eaten for dessert.

1 cup glutinous rice
1¼ cups coconut milk
¼ cup sugar
¼ TBS salt
¼ tsp rice flour
2 ripe medium mangoes, peeled and sliced
a pinch of salt for topping

Rinse the rice well and drain.
Place in rice cooker and add water according to instructions, or steam according to recipe above.
Heat ½ cup of coconut milk on low heat, in a small saucepan.
Add sugar and salt and stir until dissolved.

Remove from heat and pour onto cooked rice. Stir to mix well and set aside for about 15 minutes.

Now make topping sauce. Heat rest of coconut milk and add salt and rice flour.

Stir until the salt is dissolved and sauce is thick.

Place sliced mangoes on one side of a dessert dish for each person.

Place sticky rice on the other side.

Top rice with 1 or 2 tablespoons coconut topping sauce and serve.

LATVIA

A Baltic country between Estonia and Lithuania, Latvia largely flat, and swampy in some areas. The climate is cool and the country is covered with dense forests that yield favored foodstuffs, including honey and berries.

The population is mostly Lets, who have lived in the area since well before the arrival of the Scandinavian and Slavic tribes from the East in the Dark Ages. For 700 years, Latvia was a colony of Germany, Poland, or Russia, and only recently achieved renewed independence.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: barley, rye, and potatoes.
- Meat: pork, and to a lesser extent, duck and beef. In traditional cuisine, the best parts of the animal were reserved for the Russian, Polish, or German overlords, so the Latvians learned to make use of and enjoy the less popular parts of the carcass.
- Fish: herring from the sea, and carp and salmon from the plentiful rivers and streams.
- Vegetables: beans, cabbage, turnips.
- Fruits: berries and honey from woods, as well as harvested.

Typical Dishes

- Porridges of barley and wheat.
- Many varieties of bread, particularly rye bread, which is the basis for numerous recipes.
- *Kvass*, a drink made of rye bread and fruit juices. Vodka and beer are also drunk, as is mead (honey wine). Coffee and particularly tea are drunk between meals.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks when possible, notably in winter.
- Families eat together at least for the evening meal. Place settings are European standard.

- Breakfast: porridge, sweetened with honey; bread with cheese or ham or pickled fish.
- Lunch, which is the main meal of the day, consists of soup, a meat dish, potatoes, and a sweet.
- Supper is like lunch, but lighter, possibly without a meat dish.

Sauerkraut Soup (Skâbu Kâpostu Zupa)

This is a starter soup for the main meal.

1 pound sauerkraut
½ cup bacon, cubed
1 onion, minced fine
1 carrot, grated
¼ cup tomato paste
salt and pepper to taste
water as needed
1 TBS flour
½ cup sour cream
1 bunch dill, finely chopped

Put sauerkraut, bacon, onion, carrot, tomato paste, and seasoning in a covered pot. Add water to cover.
Simmer until sauerkraut and bacon are soft, about 10 minutes.
Take 1 TBS stock from the pot and mix well into the flour in a small bowl to make a slurry, then add to soup. Adjust seasoning and remove from heat.
Add sour cream and dill before serving.

Potato Salad (Rasols)

Salads are eaten as appetizers in large meals, or with a meat dish.

6 potatoes, boiled in their jackets, then skinned and cut into large chunks
6 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and diced
3 medium dill pickles, diced
3 pickled beets, diced
1 apple, diced

Mix all the ingredients.
Add dressing and mix well. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Dressing

3 TBS mayonnaise
2 TBS sour cream
3 tsp mustard
3 tsp vinegar
salt, pepper to taste

Blend all ingredients.

Potato and Carrot Pies (Sklandu Rausi)

Rye was the traditional crop of Latvian peasants, as it is a cold-resistant, hardy grain suitable for the climate. These vegetable-filled pies are eaten for the evening meal.

2 cups rye flour
¼ tsp salt
2 TBS butter
½ cup water

Mix flour and salt. Rub butter into flour until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add water a little at a time to make a stiff dough. Knead for 10 minutes.
Roll out dough on a floured surface to ⅛-inch thickness. Cut out disks about 8 inches in diameter.
Place them on greased cookie sheets.
Spread 1 heaping TBS of potato filling in the center of each disk to within ½ inch of the edges.
Spread 1 TBS of the cooked carrots on top.
Fold over the edges to form a crescent, crimp firmly with a fork or fingers to seal.
Bake in a moderate oven (370°F) for 15–20 minutes, or until the pastries are golden brown.

Filling

1 cup mashed potatoes
2 TBS melted butter or cream
1 egg yolk, beaten
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp caraway seeds
1 cup cooked grated carrots
2 TBS melted butter
1 egg, beaten
½ tsp salt

Mix the potatoes with melted butter, yolk, salt, and caraway seeds.
Mix the carrots with melted butter, egg, and salt.
Use potato and carrot mixtures as directed.

Pea Patties

This is a side dish to accompany meat.

½ pound dried green peas, soaked overnight, boiled until soft, and drained
¾ cup mashed potatoes
1 onion, chopped fine
2 TBS oil
4 TBS smoked bacon, cut into cubes
2 TBS hemp stalks, chopped fine
salt to taste

Mash peas with potatoes. Season.
Fry onion in oil until golden. Add bacon and hemp and stir-fry for an additional 2 minutes.
Mix with peas and potatoes. Roll into balls about the size of golf balls.
Serve as snack or for midday meal with buttermilk.

Sweet Porridge (Buberts)

This is served as a snack or dessert.

2 eggs, separated
5 TBS sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
4 cups milk
¾ cup semolina (or cream of wheat)

Beat egg yolks with 3 tablespoons sugar and the vanilla until lemon colored. Reserve.
Warm the milk over low heat in a pan, and slowly stir in semolina.
Simmer on very low heat for 5 minutes. Keep hot but do not allow to boil.
Stir in about 2 tablespoons of the warm semolina to the egg yolk mixture. Slowly add to the rest of the semolina, stirring constantly until the mixture has thickened.
Remove from heat.
Whip egg whites to soft peaks. Add the remaining sugar and continue to whip until stiff.
Fold into semolina mixture.
Serve in bowls.

Cranberry Pudding (Biguzis)

Berries were traditionally gathered from the wild, though they are now raised commercially. This is eaten as dessert or as a snack.

1 loaf fresh rye bread
3 cups cranberries
1 cup water
½ cup honey
1 cup whipping cream
sugar as needed

Crumble the rye bread into a glass bowl.
Boil the cranberries with water until the skins have popped, about 5–8 minutes.
Strain, pressing down to extract all the juices.
Add honey to cranberry juice and mix well.

(*continued*)

Pour honey and cranberry mixture over bread. Allow to stand for 30 minutes at least.

Whip the cream with 2 tablespoons sugar until stiff.

Serve the pudding with whipped cream, passing the sugar around for diners to add, if desired.

LEBANON

Lebanon, on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, has loaned its name to the entire eastern coast of the Mediterranean—the Levant. It is bordered by Syria and Israel. The country is bisected lengthwise by the Lebanon mountain range, to the east of which lies the fertile Bek'aa Valley. The climate is Mediterranean, with mild winters and hot summers, enabling a wide range of crops to be grown.

The population is largely Arab, divided among numerous Christian and Muslim sects, who engaged in a bitter civil war in the late twentieth century (1980s). Minorities of Armenians and Greeks live there as well. With the exception of the prohibition on pork among Muslims, there is little culinary difference between them. Much of the Christian population is thoroughly Westernized, with close ties to France and the United States in terms of food culture. Muslims tend to be more traditional.

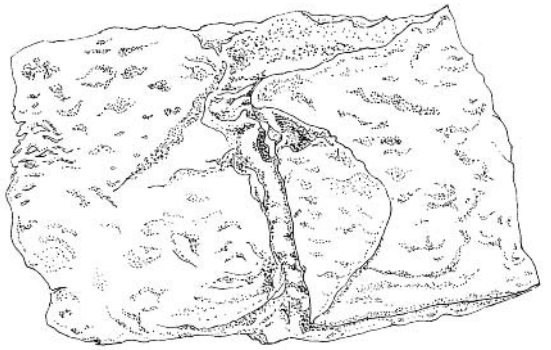
Lebanon's sophisticated cuisine has influenced much of the Middle East. Due to the country's favorable position, its population has traded throughout the Mediterranean Sea for millennia.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice, pasta, potatoes, and wheat dishes including breads (such as *lavash*) and cracked cooked wheat (*bulghur*).
- Meat: lamb is preferred; beef, chicken, and duck are also consumed. Pork is eaten only by non-Muslims. Preserved meat (by smoking, drying, salting) is an important item.
- Fish and seafood from the Mediterranean Sea, including jacks, grouper, mullets, and shrimp.
- Vegetables: tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers, beans, maize, eggplant, squashes, sesame. Olives and pickles are important items of diet.
- Fruit: citrus, olives, plums, pears, apples, grapes, cherries.
- Flavor principles include spices, particularly cumin and coriander, onions and garlic, and *samna* (ghee or clarified butter).

Typical Dishes

- *Meze*, a series of small dishes with salads, stuffed vegetables, and small tidbits.
- Salads of fresh vegetables.



LAVASH

- *Baba ganouj*, eggplant mixed with sesame sauce.
- *Shashlik*, grilled skewered lamb.
- *Tabouleh*, parsley and cracked wheat salad.
- Stuffed vegetables.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are common.
- Families generally eat together, helping themselves from a central dish (or eating European style with European place settings).
- Like most of the Middle East, breakfast can be skimpy: little more than bread, or roll, or a croissant with coffee.
- Lunch: a *meze* and some grilled meat, eaten with flat bread.
- Supper: a rice or noodle or potato dish, or several, with cooked meat, chicken, or fish.
- Lebanese have a sweet tooth, and many different kinds of pastries, often sweetened with syrup or honey, are made and consumed.
- Drinks include coffee, which is drunk in small cups; tea, beer, fruit juice, and traditional and international soft drinks. Wines and liquors, particularly anise-flavored *arak*.
- Eating out is popular, often *meze* and grilled meats. Street foods such as *falafel* are consumed in great quantities.

Home-Style Egg Dip (Tahinat el Beid)

This is served as part of a *meze* to start a meal. "Home style" usually means the ingredients do not need to be very smooth (see box "*Tahina* in Middle Eastern Cooking").

2 TBS sesame paste (*tahina*)
¼ cup lemon juice
½ cup water
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 TBS parsley, minced fine
salt to taste
1 hard-boiled egg, peeled and very finely chopped
paprika to taste

Put the sesame paste in a deep bowl.
Add lemon juice 1 tsp at a time (the quantity depends on how sour you want it), blending the juice in carefully before adding more (the mixture will first harden, then gradually emulsify). (This can also be done in a food processor.)
Add water also 1 teaspoon at a time, until you achieve a light sauce.
Add garlic, parsley, salt, and egg.
Sprinkle with paprika to taste.
Serve with flat bread to scoop out as part of a *meze*.

TAHINA *IN MIDDLE EASTERN COOKING*

Ground sesame seeds form a thick oily mass known as *tahina*, which is used throughout the Middle East. Thinned with water and lemon juice it forms a sauce that adds flavor to a number of dishes. It can be scooped with flat bread and eaten as is, added to other dishes (e.g., chickpea spread or eggplants), or used in cooking (e.g., *siniyah*). In Turkey *tahina* is often served sweet for breakfast with grape jelly. *Tahina* is also cooked with sugar to make a flaky confection called *halva*.

Tahina is made by grinding sesame seeds (hulled or unhulled, depending on preference; the latter yields a slightly more bitter, richer flavor), traditionally in marble grindstones. In Nablus, Palestine, a variety of *tahina* is made by grinding cumin seeds, which is used largely for cooking.

Parsley and Cracked Wheat Salad (Tabouleh)

Serve as part of a *meze* or on its own before the main dish.

½ cup *bulghur* (cracked wheat)
1½ cups parsley, chopped fine
½ cup fresh mint, chopped fine
2 spring onions, minced fine
1 large tomato, diced
salt to taste
6 TBS lemon juice
4 TBS virgin olive oil
lettuce leaves

Soak the *bulghur* in water for about 2 hours, then wash and squeeze out.
Mix well *bulghur*, parsley, mint, onions, and tomato.
Add salt to taste, lemon juice, and olive oil and mix well.
Serve in a bowl lined with lettuce leaves.
Serve with more lettuce leaves or flatbread for scooping out.

Toasted Bread Salad (Fattoush)

This may be served as part of a *meze*, though often served as a light meal.

3 pita breads (6 inches in diameter), each cut into eight wedges
4 cups romaine lettuce leaves, cut into 1-inch strips
2 cups sliced cucumbers
½ cup feta cheese, crumbled
¼ cup red onion, quartered and sliced
3 medium, fully ripe tomatoes cut into wedges
¼ cup virgin olive oil
¼ cup freshly squeezed, strained lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS parsley, chopped fresh
2 tsp mint leaves, dried, crushed

Preheat oven to 300°F.
Place pita wedges on a shallow baking pan. Toast until crisp, turning occasionally, for about 20 minutes. Remove from pan and cool.

(*continued*)

In a large bowl, place lettuce, cucumber, cheese, onion, tomatoes, and pita wedges.
Combine olive oil and lemon juice and season to taste.
Add parsley and mint and blend well with a fork. Pour over salad mixture.
Toss until combined.
Serve as part of a *meze*.

Stuffed Cabbage (Malfuf Mahshi bi Zayt)

Stuffed vegetables come in many variations in Lebanon. This would serve as the main dish in a meal.

Rolls

24 cabbage leaves (outer leaves of Savoy cabbage are best, or Chinese cabbage)
boiling water
3 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 tsp salt
1 tsp dried mint, crumbled
¼ cup lemon juice
½ cup olive oil

Stuffing

¼ cup vegetable oil
1 cup spring onions, chopped
1 cup rice
1 cup canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*), drained
½ cup parsley, finely chopped
1 cup tomatoes, peeled and chopped fine
½ tsp ground cumin
salt and black pepper to taste

Heat oil and fry onion for 2–3 minutes until golden.
Add the rice and stir for 5 minutes until well coated with oil.
Transfer onion and rice to a bowl, and mix well with the remaining stuffing ingredients. Season a bit stronger than usual.
Prepare the leaves: place the cabbages in boiling water for 1–2 minutes until limp.
Drain and cool the leaves in a colander.
Cut down level with the rest of the leaf the tough center rib, if necessary, to make the leaf more flexible.
To assemble the stuffed vegetables: place a generous tablespoon of stuffing on the base of each leaf, roll once, tuck in the sides and roll up to the end of the leaf. Repeat with remaining leaves.
Crush garlic with salt and blend in crumbled, crushed mint and lemon juice.
Pack the rolls flap side down in layers in a heavy pot, sprinkling some of the garlic-lemon mixture and olive oil between the layers.
Invert a plate over the topmost rolls to keep them from shifting during cooking.
Add enough cold water to just cover rolls and put lid on firmly.
Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce to lowest possible, and simmer gently for 45 minutes.

Remove from the heat and leave aside for 30 minutes.
Serve lukewarm or cold.

Date-Stuffed Cookies (Ma'amoul Btamr)

These are served as snacks with coffee.

1 pound soft dates, pitted and chopped
1½ cups water
8 ounces butter
1 pound flour
4 tsp orange blossom water (available from Middle Eastern and Asian shops) diluted in ½ cup water
confectioners' (powdered) sugar

Prepare the filling: cook dates in water and mash. Remove from fire and cool.
To make the pastry: cut butter into flour, then rub until mixture resembles coarse meal.
Mix in orange water to make a dough and knead thoroughly for 5 minutes.
Allow dough to rest for 40 minutes, covered with a damp towel.
On a floured surface, roll dough out to a 1½-inch cylinder, then cut into 1-inch pieces.
Divide date mixture into same number of portions as the dough.
Take each dough piece and mold around your thumb to make a shell to hold the filling.
Fill each ball with one date portion, seal the dough, and reshape.
Ma'amoul are often decorated using a *qalib* (a wooden mold incised with traditional patterns), or you can use a small fork to etch a pattern that will hold the confectioners' sugar to be sprinkled on them after baking.
Warm the oven to 325°F.
Bake the *ma'amoul* on a buttered cookie sheet for about 15–20 minutes. They must not brown. They will still be soft but will firm up upon cooling.
Remove from the oven and dust with confectioners' sugar.
Cool and serve.

LESOTHO

Lesotho is a landlocked southern African country. Much of the nation is composed of hilly highlands. The climate is cool and dry in winter, hot and humid in summer.

The majority of people are of the Sotho nation, speaking the Sethotho language. The traditional sources of food were farming and cattle raising. Cattle are still very important, and every adult male owns as many heads of cattle as he can afford.

Foodstuffs

- Maize is the main staple.
- Vegetables: pumpkins and squashes, beans, peppers, tomatoes, cabbages, potatoes.
- Meat: mutton and beef, though the latter is usually only eaten on special occasions; so important is cattle ownership. Chickens and some game.
- Milk and milk products such as soured milk.

Typical Dishes

- Maize cooked into a stiff porridge (*nsima*).
- Stews of vegetables or meat.
- Grilled meat.
- Steamed corn bread.
- Drinks include beer (home-brewed and commercial), fruit juice, ginger beer, and milky tea.

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day if they can afford it.
- Families usually share the pot of *nsima*, picking a ball of the porridge and making a small scoop with the thumb to convey the stew to the mouth.
- Urban people eat using European settings and cutlery.
- All meals are based on the staple *nsima*, accompanied, if possible, by a stew or sauce of vegetables.
- Breakfast: thin porridge, slightly salted, and leftovers, with coffee or milky tea.
- Lunch and dinner tend to be similar: *nsima* with a meat or vegetable dish, or both if one can afford it.

Stir-Fried Vegetables (Chakalaka)

This is served as a side dish with the staple.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
3 bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
3 carrots, scraped and chopped
3 tomatoes, chopped
hot chilies to taste, seeded and minced
salt to taste

Heat oil and stir-fry all ingredients at high heat for 4–5 minutes each, starting with the onion, then the peppers, carrots, and finally the tomatoes and chilies.
Season.
Serve with *nsima* (maize porridge) or rice.

Stewed Cabbage and Potatoes

Another common side dish served with the staple.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 TBS curry powder
10 ounces potatoes, peeled and chopped into large chunks
water as needed
10 ounces white cabbage, shredded roughly
2 tomatoes, chopped roughly
salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil and sauté onion.
Add curry powder. Cook for a few moments, stirring constantly until well blended.
Add potatoes and water to barely cover. Cook for 15 minutes or until the potato is almost done (the exterior is done, but the center needs a bit more cooking).
Add the cabbage and cook until the potatoes are completely tender.
Stir in the tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, and remove from heat.
Serve with any meat dish and *nsima*.

Braised Mashed Vegetables (Moroko)

This dish is often made to accompany a meat dish or is served on its own.

1 pound spinach or similar greens, roughly chopped
1 pound potatoes, peeled, quartered, and soaked in cold water
about 3 cups chicken stock (or 2 chicken stock cubes dissolved in 3 cups warm water)

Place the greens in the bottom of a large covered pot.
Layer the potatoes over the greens.
Add stock to cover the vegetables by one inch (top up with water if there is not enough stock)
Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cover.
Cook for 25–30 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add stock if necessary to prevent the pot from getting dry.
When the potatoes and greens are fully cooked, mash them together with a potato masher, or in a food processor.
Serve hot.

Curried Meat

Many Sotho men work in the gold and diamond mines in South Africa, and they brought back with them a taste for curry, a common South African flavoring.

3 TBS oil
1 pound stewing mutton or beef, cubed
2 cups water
1 TBS curry powder
salt to taste
½ pound cabbage, shredded roughly
½ pound squash in large chunks

Heat oil in a heavy covered pot and sauté the meat quickly until brown on all sides.
Add water, cover, and slowly simmer the meat until tender, about 30–45 minutes.
Stir in the curry powder, salt, and vegetables.
Cook the vegetables for 15–20 minutes until the squash is tender.
Serve with *moroko* and *nsima*.

Peanut Bread

As in much of Africa, peanuts are a major source of protein and flavoring. This bread is a Sotho version of a bread common in much of southern Africa, eaten for breakfast or as a snack.

1 cup flour
½ cup rolled oats
½ cup cornmeal
½ cup dry milk powder
½ cup sugar
1 TBS baking powder
1 tsp salt
⅔ cup natural unsweetened peanut butter
1½ cups milk
1 egg, well beaten

Combine dry ingredients.
Cut in the peanut butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal. (This can be done in a food processor.)
Mix in milk and egg.
Turn mixture into a greased 8×10-inch pan.
Bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour at 275°F.
Serve as snack.

LIBERIA

Liberia, in West Africa on the Atlantic coast, was founded by slaves freed from the United States in the early nineteenth century. The climate is tropical, and the terrain is flat with rolling hills. Staples such as cassava, yams, fruits, and vegetables are grown.

The freed slaves settled all along the coast, rarely paying any attention to the interior, so there are major differences between the culture and cooking of the descendants of former Americans in the coastal areas and the inland natives.

Cooking for some households is influenced by American elements, with the majority similar to other West African styles: staples served with vegetable- or peanut-based sauces, with or without meat or fish.

Foodstuffs

- Rice is the preferred staple, eaten twice a day in any household that can afford it. This is often restricted to wealthier, American-descended households, and along the coast.
- Cassava, taro, hot red peppers, sweet potatoes, yams, and green bananas are common staples and appear in many dishes, particularly those from upcountry, away from the coast.
- Vegetables: greens, eggplant, okra, peanuts, and ginger.
- Meat: goat, chicken, and sometimes beef.
- Fish: marine fish are caught by coastal fishermen in small boats. Rivers yield crustaceans, frogs, and river fish, some of which are dried and smoked.

Typical Dishes

- Check rice: a combination of rice and okra.
- Goat soup: the "national soup" served extensively, and almost always features in formal occasions.
- Country chop: meats, fish, and greens fried in palm oil, Liberia's best-known dish.
- Jollof rice: rice cooked with meat and various vegetables.
- Rice bread with mashed bananas.
- American pastries—coconut pie, sweet potato pie, and pumpkin pie—are extremely popular.

- Peanuts are extensively used in both sweet and savory cooking.
- Drinks: fruit juices, carbonated bottled drinks; ginger beer, palm wine, both drunk with meals.

COLLARD GREENS

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are preferred, though, given the poverty in the country, many people do without.
- In traditional African households, food is eaten with the fingers, though European place settings are common in urban areas. All food is brought to the table at once, and diners help themselves to whatsoever they choose. Soup is served in small bowls; all other dishes are eaten from the same plate.
- Breakfast is usually some form of porridge, or sometimes bread, with coffee.
- Lunch and dinner are not differentiated, though only one of these is likely to include meat or fish.
- Roadside restaurants called "cook shops" feature Jollof rice and various stewed dishes.

Chicken Peanut Soup

This usually serves as a main dish.

1 chicken, cut into serving pieces
1 TBS salt
5 pints cold water
3 tsp shelled, roasted, ground peanuts (or substitute natural unsweetened peanut butter)
2 tsp tomato paste
1 sprig parsley, chopped
¼ tsp black pepper
1 small potato, peeled and diced

Place chicken, salt, and water in a pot. Cover and bring slowly to a boil. Skim froth if necessary.
Simmer gently for 20 minutes.
Mix peanut butter with ¼ pint chicken stock from the pot and add to the chicken.
Add remaining ingredients and cover.
Simmer gently for about 1 hour.
Serve hot with rice.

Liberian Jollof Rice

Like several other West African countries, Liberia claims Jollof rice for its own. This is a popular festive dish.

4 TBS oil
1 chicken, cut into serving pieces
½ pound smoked ham, cubed
2 onions, sliced
salt and black pepper to taste
¼ tsp allspice powder
2 14-ounce cans chopped tomatoes
6 ounces tomato paste diluted with an equal volume of warm water
¾ pint stock
¼ pound French beans, cut into 2-inch lengths
8 ounces rice
1 tsp salt

Heat oil in a casserole or a large sauté pan and brown chicken, turning pieces when done on one side.
Add ham, onions, salt, pepper, and allspice.
Cook until onions are tender, stirring occasionally.
Add tomatoes, tomato paste, and stock. Mix well.
Add French beans. Cover and simmer until beans are tender (10 minutes or so).
In a separate pot, cook rice for 10 minutes in double the volume of lightly salted water. Drain well.
Add rice to meat and vegetables and mix well.
Continue to simmer over lowest heat, covered and well sealed, for 10 minutes.
Remove from heat, and let rest undisturbed for 10–15 minutes.
Serve as main dish in a festive meal.

Monrovia Greens

Most meals are accompanied by some form of greens with the rice. Meat is less likely.

2 pounds collard greens (or spinach or kale, removing hard stalk parts of kale), washed and cut in small pieces
½ pound smoked salted fish, cut in 1- to 2-inch pieces (or substitute smoked bacon)
1 large onion, sliced
salt, black pepper, chili pepper flakes to taste
1 quart water
2 pounds cabbage, cut into halves and then eight wedges
1 TBS palm oil

Combine greens, salted fish, onion, salt, pepper, chili flakes, and water in a large pot.
Simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Add cabbage and palm oil.
Cook for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Correct the seasoning.
Strain before serving if water has not been completely absorbed.
Serve with a meat dish and rice.

Cassava Cake

Cassava is used in inland communities as a staple. In urban areas it is more likely made into a cake as dessert or a snack.

½ pound cassava (yucca), peeled and grated
¼ pint milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 egg, beaten
3 ounces butter
8 ounces sugar
2½ ounces desiccated coconut
2 ounces flour
2½ level tsp baking powder
⅛ tsp salt

Mix cassava with milk, vanilla, and egg, and allow to stand for 5 minutes.
Cream butter and sugar, and add cassava mixture and coconut. Mix batter well.
Sift flour, baking powder, and salt, and add to batter.
Turn batter into a buttered and floured 8-inch round cake pan.
Bake for about 40 minutes in a preheated 350°F oven, or until cake tests done.
Remove from oven, cool, and cut into squares or bars.
Serve as snack.

Liberian Cake

This is an American-influenced snack or dessert commonly made in coastal Liberia.

½ cup corn syrup (or substitute molasses thinned with hot water)
¼ cup milk
3 ounces butter
3 ounces sugar
1 tsp lemon rind, grated
2 eggs
1 cup plain flour
½ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp ground mace
⅛ tsp powdered cloves
⅓ cup seedless raisins, chopped
2 TBS shredded coconut

Mix syrup and milk and reserve.
Cream the butter, sugar, and lemon rind until light and fluffy.

(*continued*)

Add eggs one at a time, mixing well into the creamed mixture.
Sift together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and spices, and add to the egg mixture alternately with the mixture of milk and syrup (start and end with dry ingredients).
Stir until smooth.
Stir in raisins and coconut.
Pour batter into a greased and floured 9 × 5 × 2-inch loaf pan.
Bake for 35–40 minutes.
Allow to cool for 10 minutes in the pan, then turn out onto a cake rack.

LIBYA

Libya is a mainly desert country on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, between Tunisia and Egypt. Except for a narrow coastal strip, the country is largely part of the Sahara desert, mostly flat plain and rolling hills. The climate is hot and dry all the year round, hence much food is imported, including staples such as wheat and rice.

Most of the inland people were traditionally nomads, living off camels, sheep, and dates. The coastal people had been urbanized since Roman times. Since the discovery of oil in the mid-twentieth century, Libyans have become predominantly urbanized. The population is virtually all Muslim Arab.

The cuisine is characteristic of Middle Eastern and Arab cookery.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are wheat bread and rice. Couscous features in many meals.
- Lamb is the favorite meat. Beef and chicken and, among nomads, camel are also eaten. Pork is forbidden.
- Fish: Mediterranean fish along the coastline.
- Fruit: locally raised dates, citrus, grapes, olives.
- Vegetables: peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots.
- Dairy: milk and milk products including yogurt, soft cheeses, and buttermilk.

Typical Dishes

- Roasted or baked lamb and lamb soup are favorite dishes and are served to guests when possible.
- Couscous and couscous stews, with Libyan twists.
- Stuffed vegetables, including cabbage, potatoes, onions, peppers, tomatoes, and grape leaves (*abrak*).
- Pastries, often made of *brik* (puff pastry) and filled with dates, almonds, or other nuts.
- Tea flavored with mint or desert thyme can be drunk at all hours.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are common on the coast. Further inland, nomads tend to eat only twice a day.
- Families may eat together, sharing food from a common dish. The traditional way of eating is with the right hand only, which is washed before and after dining.
- Males and females generally eat separately (a gender separation is maintained throughout life).
- Breakfast: bread, yogurt, raw vegetables, coffee, cheese, a handful of dates.
- Lunch: usually light, a pocket bread with filling.
- Evening meal: heaviest of the day, with rice, couscous, a stew or some roast meat, fish, vegetable salads, cooked vegetables. Soup is often drunk from glasses, as a prelude to the main meal.
- As in many North African countries, coffee and sweetmeats of various sorts, often sweetened with dates, are highly esteemed as snacks and to entertain guests. Snacks are common in the many cafes that also serve as centers for social life for men.
- Coffee preparation and serving is a major art, and, in traditional nomad tribes, coffee was often prepared by specialists (see Eritrea for the box "Coffee Ritual"). A man's adulthood is determined, among some tribes, by his ability to pour coffee accurately from a pot held over a tiny coffee cup as much as 2–3 feet below.

Libyan Lamb Soup (Shorba)

Lamb is a favorite meat in Libya, and many meals start with this soup.

4 TBS olive oil
1½ pounds boneless, lean cubed stewing lamb
1 onion, chopped
4 TBS tomato paste
salt, dried chili flakes to taste
1½ pints water
6 ounces vermicelli noodles, uncooked
3 TBS chopped fresh mint
1½ TBS lemon juice

Heat oil in a deep pot and brown meat and onion for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
Add tomato paste, salt, chili flakes, and water.
Cover and simmer for 1 hour, or until meat is tender.
Add noodles, and additional water, if needed.
Cook, uncovered, until noodles are tender, for about 8–12 minutes.
Add mint and lemon juice just before serving.
Serve as a starter.

Libyan-Style Couscous Stew (Couscous b'Lahm)

Couscous—steamed grain (see Algeria for the box "Couscous")—is the common staple throughout North Africa.

¼ cup olive oil
1 pound boneless, lean stewing lamb, cubed
3 large onions, sliced ½-inch thick
1 large tomato, cubed
chili flakes to taste
¼ tsp ground allspice
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp salt
¼ cup tomato paste
1½ cups boiling water
2 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered
7 ounces canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*)
couscous for four (see Algeria for the box "Couscous")

Heat oil in the bottom half of a large couscousier or heavy saucepan. Brown the meat on all sides.
Add half of the onions and the tomato.
Continue cooking over low heat for 10 minutes.
Add chili, allspice, turmeric, salt, tomato paste, and water.
Cover and simmer for 30–40 minutes.
Add potatoes and the remaining onions.
Simmer for 20–25 minutes, adding more water, if needed.
Add the chickpeas with their liquid and simmer for 10 minutes, or until heated through.
Mound the cooked couscous in a large bowl or basin. Arrange the meat and vegetables over the cereal, and ladle some broth over the couscous.
Let the dish stand for 5 minutes to allow the grain to absorb the broth.
Serve some of the broth in a bowl for diners to add while eating, as wished.

Stuffed Grape Leaves (Abrak)

The grape leaves intended for stuffing are picked while young and tender, early in the morning, and pickled in brine. They have been used in Mediterranean cooking for centuries.

¾ cup rice
boiling water as needed
½ cup minced lamb
1 medium onion, finely chopped
½ cup tomatoes, chopped
½ cup butter, melted
salt, pepper to taste
5 TBS parsley, minced
40 prepared grape leaves (available in jars or cans from Greek and Turkish stores), softened in boiling water for 5–8 minutes, then drained
juice from 1 large lemon

Prepare the stuffing: add rice to ½ pint boiling water.
Boil for 5 minutes, drain, and place in a large bowl.
Add the lamb, onion, tomatoes, a quarter of the melted butter, salt, pepper, and parsley to the rice. Mix well.

(*continued*)

To assemble the stuffed leaves: place the leaf with its base nearest you on a flat plate or chopping board. Place about 1 tablespoons rice stuffing on the base of the leaf. Snip off any remaining leaf stalk.
Fold the base over once to enclose the stuffing. Fold both sides over.
Roll the leaf securely from base to tip (packages should be about ½ inch × 2 to 3 inches).
Grease a heavy saucepan with a tight-fitting lid with some of the butter and place grape leaf rolls in the pan, loose edges down.
Pour over the remaining butter and lemon juice. Add boiling water to just barely cover.
Place a small plate face down on the topmost leaves to prevent them moving around while cooking.
Cover tightly and cook over low heat for 35–45 minutes.
Remove from heat and leave undisturbed for about 15–20 minutes in the pan.
Serve hot or cold as appetizers.

Stuffed Onions (Basal Mahshi)

Various forms of stuffed vegetables are one of the Middle East's most common foods, available in a variety found nowhere else. This Libyan version has cousins all over the Levant.

4 large onions (approximately 1½ pounds), peeled
½ pound ground lamb or mutton
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 egg, beaten
1½ ounces flour
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS olive oil
8 ounces chopped tomatoes (or canned tomatoes)
½ tsp sweet paprika powder
½ tsp fenugreek powder
1 bay leaf

Cut a thin disk from the base of each onion so they can stand upright in a small heavy pot.
Cut a disk off the top, and remove the center (with a tsp or an apple corer) to create a shell for stuffing, with a wall about 2–3 onion layers thick.
Reserve the onion centers and keep the top disks to serve as lids. Salt and pepper the shells and set aside.
Finely mince the onion centers and mix with the meat, garlic, egg, flour, and seasoning. Fill onion shells with the mixture. Top with the lids.
Heat oil in a pot small enough to hold all the onions upright. (If not, have some small heat-proof bowls ready to wedge onions into place.)
Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, paprika, fenugreek, and bay leaf.
Let boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat.
Place stuffed onions upright in the pot. Tuck in the bay leaf among the onions. (Wedge the onions into place with small bowls if necessary.)
Baste onions with some tomato sauce.

Return to the heat and simmer gently for 1 hour, covered.
Serve with rice.

Date Sweet (Halwa d'Tmar)

Dates, fresh, dried, and cooked, have been a staple of Libyan life for centuries, and various types of dates are still hugely popular.

10 ounces dates, pitted and chopped very fine
4 ounces walnuts, chopped
4 ounces dried figs, chopped
¼ tsp anise seed
¼ tsp coriander powder
2 tsp honey
½ tsp orange blossom water

In a bowl, mix thoroughly the dates, walnuts, figs, spices, honey, and orange blossom water.
Pat into a 6 × 6-inch baking pan or glass dish and press lightly to level the surface.
Chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight.
Cut with a sharp knife into small squares or lozenges and serve.

LIECHTENSTEIN

Liechtenstein is a small, independent principality between Switzerland and Austria that used to be part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. It is mostly mountainous, with a broad valley, with cold winters and moderately warm summers ideal for cows and milk production.

The population is German speaking. The cuisine is very similar to that of the neighboring areas of Austria and Switzerland, with milk products very important in the diet.

Foodstuffs

- Bread, potatoes, cabbages, and greens are the major vegetable products.
- Meat, particularly beef, is eaten frequently. Chicken and pork also feature in many dishes.
- An extensive dairy industry means that milk products, including butter, cheeses, and cream are major items on the menu.

Typical Dishes

- Hearty soups and stews.
- Baked and roasted meats.
- Sandwiches and various types of breads.
- Pastries similar to Austrian varieties are common.
- Wine and beer are common drinks during the meal. Milk is drunk by most people.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Table settings are European standard. Meals tend to be formal.
- Breakfast: *muesli* with flavored or unflavored yogurt; cheese and cold cuts; various types of bread; coffee, milk, or cocoa.
- Lunch: light meal, often a meat sandwich or a bowl of soup with bread and butter.
- Evening meal: usually a substantial meal of at least three dishes—an appetizer; a main dish of meat, vegetables, and a carbohydrate such as potatoes; and a dessert, often topped with cream.

- Many people stop at mid-morning and mid-afternoon for a coffee and pastry, often topped with whipped cream.

Beef Soup with Liver Dumplings (Leber Knödelsuppe)

Liver is a common ingredient. Serve this as a light meal with bread and salad, or as a first course.

2 TBS butter
1 onion, very finely minced or grated
½ cup calf or chicken liver, minced or finely chopped
1 thick slice stale bread, soaked in water, then squeezed dry
1 egg, lightly beaten
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
¼ tsp nutmeg
6 cups well-flavored beef broth
3 TBS fresh parsley, minced, for garnish

Heat butter in a frying pan and sauté onion until golden.
Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl.
Add the liver, bread, egg, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Mix well.
Allow to rest 10 minutes refrigerated, covered with plastic film.
Shape mixture into marble-sized dumplings. (If the mixture is not firm enough, add a bit of flour or bread crumbs.)
Bring the beef broth to a simmer in a large saucepan.
Slip dumplings in and allow to simmer, covered, for about 10 minutes or until the liver is done.
Serve dumplings and soup in individual bowls, sprinkled with parsley.

Meatball Sandwich (Frikadellen Broetchen)

This is a variation on your usual hamburger. Serve with sauerkraut or pickled cucumber or pickled beet.

4 cooked meatballs, any type, or hamburgers, chopped small
4 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and chopped
2 tsp mustard
salt and pepper to taste
4 crusty buns, each sliced in half

Mix chopped meatballs, eggs, and mustard, and season to taste.
Spread on one half of a bun.
Top with the other half.

LITHUANIA

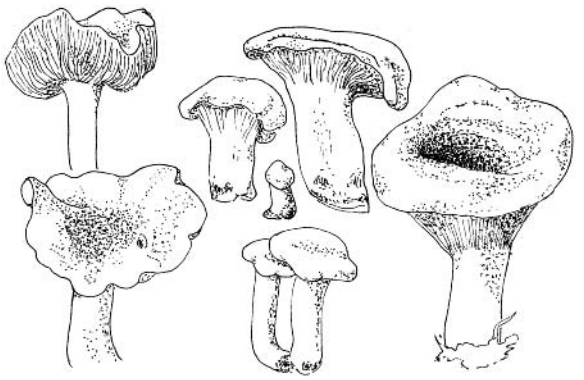
A Baltic country between Estonia and Russia, Lithuania is one of the three Northern European countries (the others are Latvia and Estonia) speaking distinct singular languages but sharing a common culture and ecology. The country is largely flat and is covered by forests. Climate is cool and damp, colder in winter, and cold-resistant staple grains such as rye are grown.

The majority of the population is of Baltic origin, with a significant Russian minority, a residue of the Russian empire, which ruled Lithuania for centuries.

The cuisine shares many elements with Russian and Estonian cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Rye, oats, and barley are the major crops, supplemented in modern times by wheat.
- Pork is the most important meat, and may be fresh, smoked, or pickled in brine. Beef is also eaten.
- Fish from the Baltic and fresh-water fish from the rivers are much prized. Pickled and smoked herring are traditional winter foods.
- Cabbage, potatoes, peas, onions, mushrooms are common vegetables. Wild greens and particularly mushrooms are a standard item of diet, and Lithuanian forests and fields boast several hundred varieties of wild mushrooms.
- Milk products, notably buttermilk, cream, and butter are part of many dishes.



WILD MUSHROOMS

Typical Dishes

- Dumplings, stuffed with meat or with berries.
- Herring, fresh and preserved, cooked in various ways.
- Soup is the main dinner and supper food and is traditionally eaten every day.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day are common.
- Modern Lithuanians eat with standard European table settings.
- Breakfast: porridge (traditional), rye bread and butter, buttermilk, tea or coffee.
- Lunch: heavy meal with soup, bread, and possibly a fish or meat dish with potatoes or cabbage.
- Evening meal: similar to lunch; a soup may be the center, but without a meat or fish dish.
- Drinks include *kvass* (a drink made of rye bread or berries; see box "*Kvass*"), beer, and tea, drunk Russian style with a cube of sugar held between the teeth; buttermilk; fruit juices.

KVASS

Kvass is the most common traditional drink throughout eastern and northern Europe. It was made by most traditional households on a regular basis. Basically it is a process of recycling bread, though there are a number of flavoring variations. It is, in fact, a variation on the drink that most people in these regions consumed throughout the Middle Ages and later. *Kvass* is also available as a bottled soft drink at Russian and Baltic stores in some areas.

Latvian **Gira**

Gira is a form of *kvass* which exploits a common ingredient in Latvian cooking: honey.

1 pound rye bread
1 gallon hot water
1 ounce sugar
1 pound honey
½ ounce yeast

Slice bread and toast it until brown. Place in large glass or stainless steel bowl.
Pour water over bread.
Allow to rest for 6 hours, covered loosely.
Pass through a sieve into a glass covered jar.
Add sugar, half the honey, and yeast.
Place in a warm place for 24 hours.
Add the rest of honey and mix well.
Chill and consume immediately.

Romanian **Cvas**

This recipe is the most basic form of *kvass,* common throughout eastern Europe.

2 pounds rye bread, sliced thin
1 pound sugar
12 quarts boiling water

(*continued*)

rind of half a lemon, whole
1 ounce yeast

Dry the thinly sliced bread in the oven.
Add sugar to boiling water and pour on top of the dried bread in a 15-quart glass jar.
Add rind.
Cover with a napkin and let stand for 4–5 hours.
Strain through cheesecloth or a fine sieve.
Add the yeast dissolved in a little of the liquid. Mix, cover with a napkin, and let stand for another 4–5 hours until the drink starts to foam.
Strain a second time and chill. Serve immediately.

Russian Fruit **Kvass**

Russians drink large amounts of "standard" *kvass* made on a rye bread base. However, they also make fruit "*kvass.*"

1 pound apples
2 ounces raisins
1 pound sugar
1 gallon water, boiled
½ ounce yeast

Rinse and core apples. Chop fine. Place in a large steel, enamel, or ceramic bowl.
Add raisins and sugar and pour hot water.
Allow to cool.
Add yeast and allow to stand in a warm spot for 12 hours.
Strain, discard must, and serve cool.

Mint **Kvass**

This is another Russian variation on *kvass*.

1 pound stale black rye bread
6 quarts water
2 TBS active dry yeast
1 cup sugar
½ cup lukewarm water
3 TBS fresh mint leaves
4 TBS raisins

Preheat oven to 180°F.
Place the bread in the oven for about 1 hour, until it is thoroughly dry. Chop bread coarsely.
Bring 6 quarts water to a boil in a large pot. Add bread.
Remove from heat, cover loosely with a clean kitchen towel, and set aside overnight.
Strain through a fine sieve or cheesecloth into another large pot, squeezing soaked bread to extract all liquid. Discard solids.
Sprinkle yeast and ¼ tsp sugar over ½ cup lukewarm water.
Stir to dissolve the yeast completely. Set aside in a warm, draft-free spot for about 10 minutes or until the mixture doubles in volume.

Stir the yeast mixture, remaining sugar, and the mint into the bread liquid.
Cover with a towel, and set aside for 8 hours.
Strain the mixture again.
Bottle into 2 or 3 quart-sized bottles or a gallon jug to about ⅔ of the way to the top.
Divide raisins among the bottles and cover the top of each bottle with plastic wrap, secured with a rubber band.
Place in a cool, but not cold, spot overnight, or until the raisins have risen to the top and the sediment has sunk to the bottom.
Carefully draw off the clear liquid and consume immediately.

Zeppelins or Stuffed Dumplings (Cepelinai)

Cepelinai are giant dumplings named for Zeppelin air ships. They are a Lithuanian specialty, served as a main dish.

Meat Stuffing

2 TBS oil
¾ cup onions, minced fine
8 ounces ground pork
salt and black pepper to taste
1 TBS fresh dill, minced

Heat oil and fry onions until translucent.
Add pork and briefly fry until it changes color. Remove from heat.
Season with salt, pepper and dill.
Knead mixture thoroughly and set aside until needed.

Dough

3 pounds raw potatoes, peeled, grated fine, and squeezed to expel liquid
2 pounds mashed potatoes
4 tsp cornstarch or potato flour
1½ tsp salt
1 cup sour cream for serving
½ cup crisp fried onions, ¼ cup crisp bacon bits for garnish

In a large bowl, mix the raw and mashed potatoes, starch, and salt.
Knead thoroughly.
With moistened hands, take a fistful of the potato dough and press it flat on your palm, ½-inch thick and ¾ the length of your hand.
Place a walnut-sized piece of the stuffing in the center of the pressed dough.
Bring the dough over the stuffing to fully enclose it. Add more dough if necessary. Taper the sides.
The finished dumpling should be as big as your fist and shaped like a lemon.
Slip the dumplings, a few at a time, into plenty of salted simmering water and simmer for approximately 25 minutes, counting from when they start floating.

(*continued*)

Drain and keep warm while cooking the rest.
Serve with sour cream, fried onions, and hot bacon bits.

Pork Cooked in Buttermilk (Rûgusiame Piene Virta Kiauliena)

This stew is a popular main dish, served with boiled potatoes.

1¼ pounds boneless pork pieces, roughly ½-inch thick and 2 inches square
1 cup buttermilk
¼ tsp salt
1 bay leaf
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 onions, chopped
2 TBS butter
2 tomatoes, chopped (or ½ cup canned chopped tomatoes)
1 carrot, pared and finely sliced
3 celery stalks, finely sliced
2 leeks, white part only, finely sliced
1 parsnip, pared and finely sliced
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS flour

Cover meat with buttermilk. Add salt, bay leaf, and garlic; cover pot and cook on low heat.
Meanwhile, in a heavy saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, fry onions in butter until translucent.
Add tomatoes, carrot, celery, leeks, parsnip, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add meat and buttermilk mixure to the vegetables and simmer on low heat for about 20–30 minutes, until meat is tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Mix 2 tablespoons of the cooking liquid with the flour until smooth. Pour the flour mixture into the stew and cook, stirring, until the stew thickens.
Serve with boiled potatoes and sauerkraut.

Mushrooms in a Blanket (Kepti Grybai Tedthloje)

Mushrooms, especially during the season, can be served at any meal.

1 pound fresh mushrooms
2 TBS flour
a pinch of salt
1 egg, beaten
2 TBS flour
4 TBS bread crumbs
3 ounces butter

Clean mushrooms. Cut in half lengthwise and dust with salted flour.
Dip mushroom halves into egg and roll in bread crumbs.
Fry breaded mushrooms in hot butter.

Place fried mushrooms on a baking sheet and bake in preheated oven at 250°F, for about 10 minutes.
Serve as side dish, or with bread as a snack.

Herring in Sour Cream (Grietinîje Virta Silkê)

Baltic herring is a major mainstay for the winter, as most of the fishing catch is salted or smoked. Fresh herring is consumed only so long as the fishing season lasts and is a major seasonal delicacy.

4 fresh herring fillets
2 cups sour cream
a pinch of pepper
1 onion, sliced thin
1 bunch fresh dill, finely chopped

Cut herring into bite-sized pieces.
Pour sour cream into a heavy-bottomed frying pan, and add herring and pepper. Cook on low heat until sour cream thickens and turns yellow.
Arrange herring pieces on a serving dish, cover with the cooked sour cream and sliced onion. Sprinkle with dill.
Serve with bread or hot potatoes as a snack or for a light lunch.

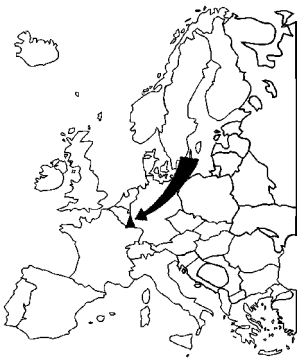
Onions Stuffed with Beets (Burokëliais Ádaryti Svogûnai)

Vegetables can serve as the main dish, along with rye bread for supper, or as a side dish for lunch.

4 large onions, peeled and trimmed (parboiled for 2 minutes before being stuffed, if desired)
1 pickled beet, diced
salt to taste
¼ tsp pepper
a pinch of sugar
4 TBS juice of pickled beets

Scoop out the onion centers, leaving walls about three onion layers thick.
Chop onion centers and mix with beet, salt, pepper, and sugar.
Fill onions with beet mixture.
Place filled onions on a serving platter.
Pour beet juice over.
Serve with meat dishes.

LUXEMBOURG



Luxembourg is a small landlocked country between Germany, France, and Belgium. The country is partly mountain, partly lowland plain. Weather is cool and often rainy.

The cuisine borrows from all neighboring countries and adds twists of its own. Many dishes are flavored with or based on the fruits of local orchards: plums, peaches, apples, grapes.

Foodstuffs

- Potatoes, grain dumplings, and fritters are favorite carbohydrates.
- Pork is the favorite meat. Beef and lamb are consumed, as well as geese and chicken.
- Fish from the Moselle River as well as sea fish brought from the other Low Countries.
- Vegetables: cabbage, carrots, peas and beans, asparagus, carrots, endive.
- Fruit: Luxembourg's orchards are famous for pears, plums, and particularly grapes, many of which go into making the famous Moselle wines.

Typical Dishes

- Soups, including bean soup (*Bou'neschlupp*) and nettle soup (*Brennesselszop*).
- Fish dishes, including the famous *friture*.
- Black pudding (*treipen*), ham in hay, and pork in aspic (*jhelli*).
- Crisp carnival pastry (*verwurrelt gedanken*), plum tart (*quetscheflued*).

Styles of Eating

- Most people eat three meals a day and snacks, stopping at mid-morning for a bite and in late afternoon for a bite and a drink.
- European place settings, including forks, spoons, and knives for different courses. Dining can be formal.
- Breakfast: a large cup or bowl of milky coffee and a slice of fresh bread, or rolls, cold cuts, cheese.
- Lunch: a relatively light meal, often a soup and a salad with bread.
- Evening meals: the major meal of the day, which can include an appetizer, a soup, a main course of meat and a carbohydrate, and some cooked vegetables.

Dessert follows, which is fruit or a cooked dish, often smothered in whipped cream.
- Snacks are often creamy cakes and coffee.

Green Bean Soup (Bou'neschlupp)

A soup is often the main dish during lunch.

2 pounds green or wax beans or snap beans
½ pound potatoes, peeled and diced
½ pound onion, diced
4 cups bouillon (or 2 bouillon cubes dissolved in 4 cups water)
4 slices bacon, chopped
salt, pepper to taste
½ pint sour cream

Simmer vegetables in a pot with bouillon and pepper until soft, about 25 minutes. Add water if necessary.
Meanwhile, in a frying pan, dry fry the bacon briefly.
Add bacon to vegetables.
When vegetables are done, remove from fire.
Adjust seasoning (salt may not be needed because of the bouillon and bacon).
Add sour cream, stirring briefly so that the cream is in swirls.
It is traditional to add a sausage to each soup plate, if desired.

Fried Moselle Fish (Friture de la Moselle)

This is a typical dish of the Moselle region, which produces a famous white wine. *Friture* are traditionally eaten with the fingers. Supply a bowl of fresh lemon water for washing hands.

½ pound cleaned and scaled small fresh-water fish (or fish fillets sliced into strips) per person
juice of 1 lemon
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp white pepper
5 ounces flour
oil for deep-frying (traditionally, a mix of ¼ pork fat and ¾ vegetable oil)
a bunch of parsley
2 lemons, quartered
1 lemon squeezed into individual bowls of fresh water

(*continued*)

Mix the fish and lemon juice, turning well in a large bowl.
Place fish in a second bowl and toss with salt and pepper.
Make sure the fish are well coated.
Place flour in a paper bag, close bag, add fish, and shake until well coated.
Heat oil in a deep fryer to 356°F.
Cook the fish by portion until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and keep warm while preparing the rest.
Serve on a warmed plate and garnish each with a lemon quarter and a sprig of parsley.
Offer diners the bowl of lemon water after dining to cleanse their hands.

Ham in Hay (Haam am Hée)

This recipe comes from the very north of Luxembourg and is almost impossible to replicate in an urban environment.

fresh, clean organic (not sprayed by any pesticide) hay
about 1 gallon water
2–3 pounds smoked ham in one piece

Take the largest pot you can find and fill one-third to one-half with fresh hay.
Pour sufficient water so that it is half the depth of the hay.
Lay the ham directly on the hay making sure it does not touch the water.
Cover the pot and bring to a boil. Allow to cook for 20 minutes per pound. Check after 10 minutes, and add hay if necessary to keep the ham out of water, or water if too much has evaporated.
Serve on a bed of hay with fried potatoes and salad.

Buckwheat Dumplings (Staerzelen)

Buckwheat is cold hardy and can grow in barren soil, making it a commonly raised grain in northern Europe. This dish is typical of the Ösling area.

1 quart salted water
1 pound buckwheat flour (available from health stores and Japanese stores)
1 cup of hot lard or melted butter
1 pint cream or whole milk
6 ounces smoked bacon, diced and lightly fried

Boil the water. As soon as it comes to a boil, sprinkle in the flour in a steady stream.
Stir once and transfer the doughy mass at once to a bowl (it will be quite solid).

Dip a tablespoon in the hot fat, take a spoonful of the dough and, with the help of another spoon, shape a round dumpling.
Place the dumplings gently in a mound in a prewarmed serving bowl.
Pour cream or milk over the mounded dumplings and garnish with bacon.

Potato Fritters (Gromperekichelcher)

This is served to accompany a meat dish or as a light meal on its own.

2 pounds potatoes, peeled and coarsely grated
1 bunch parsley
2 shallots
3 onions
2 TBS flour
4 eggs, beaten
salt and pepper to taste
oil for frying

Squeeze potatoes in a kitchen towel or cheesecloth to extract liquid.
Chop parsley, shallots, and onions together and mix with the potatoes.
Add flour and mix in.
Add the eggs.
Season to taste.
Heat about ¼ inch of oil until moderately hot in a heavy frying pan.
Drop 1 heaping tablespoonful of the mixture, and flatten out to about ¼-inch thick. Repeat, cooking two to four at a time (depending on size of frying pan). Fry until golden on both sides, turning over when necessary.
Serve with apple sauce and sour cream.

Plum Tart (Quetscheflued)

This is a dessert showcasing the famous orchard fruits on the hills above the Moselle.

½ ounce dry yeast
3 TBS sugar
2 cups milk at room temperature
¼ tsp salt
2 TBS butter, melted
1 egg, beaten
½ pound flour
1–2 pounds Damson plums, cut in half, pits discarded
sugar for serving

Heat oven to 370°F.
Mix yeast, sugar, milk, salt, butter, and egg.
Allow to rest for 5 minutes.
Mix into flour with wooden spoon (or in a food processor).
Knead flour on a floured surface until smooth and elastic.

(*continued*)

Place dough in a warm spot, covered with damp towel, for 1 hour.
Spread the dough onto a 12-inch buttered pie or tart pan.
Cover the dough closely with the plums in a circular or other pattern.
Bake until pastry is golden on the edges, about 30 minutes.
Sprinkle with sugar before serving (alternatively, do so ten minutes before the end of baking so that the sugar gets caramelized on the fruit).

MACEDONIA

A landlocked Balkan country, Macedonia was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries and subsequently part of Yugoslavia until 1991 (the full name of the country is Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: FYROM). Macedonia is rugged and mountainous, with several lakes, but its moderate climate is ideal for food crops such as wheat, grapes, and olives.

The population is divided between Christian (Slavic) Macedonians and Muslim Albanians. Macedonian cuisine is influenced by Greek, Turkish, and Slavic cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: bread, potatoes.
- Lamb/mutton (preferred), pork (not for Muslims), beef, poultry, preserved meat (smoked), internal organs, dairy products (yogurt, sour cream, cheese), chicken eggs.
- Potatoes, olives, maize, beans, cabbage, tomato, chili pepper, beets, cucumber, eggplant.
- Grapes, watermelon, apple, plum, cherry, quince.
- Seasonings: mint, parsley, paprika, bay leaf, garlic, oregano.

Typical Dishes

- Meat dishes: grilled skewered lamb cubes (*muchkalica*) or meatballs (*kjebapchinja*); lamb roasted with vegetables (*pecheno jagne so zelka*).
- Baked casseroles: mixed meat and vegetables (*turli tarva*); pork, mushrooms, and wine (*selsko meso*); baked beans (*tavche gravche*).
- Fish dish: fried trout with lemon and sour cream (*pastrmka*).
- Vegetable dishes: sweet pepper spread (*ajvar*); pickles (*turshija*); stuffed peppers, cabbage, grape leaves; Turkish-influenced eggplant casserole (*musaka*).
- Salads: cucumbers, tomatoes, and onions with feta cheese (*shopska*); baked chopped eggplant, tomatoes and bell peppers (*pindzur*).
- Turkish-influenced rich sweets: multilayered nut-filled pastry drizzled in syrup (*baklava*).

- Drinks: coffee drunk black, thick, and sweet (*Tursko kafe*), bottled local and international fruit drinks, local beer, local grape liquor called *rakija*, and local wine.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Meal times are long: food and drink are less important than company and conversation.
- Breakfast: cheese-filled flaky pastry (*burek*), yogurt or coffee.
- Lunch (around 2 p.m.): Macedonian pizza (*pastrmajlija*—meat and egg-topped pizza base without tomato sauce); grilled meats with fried potatoes and *shopska* salad.
- Dinner (soon after 6 p.m.): lamb soup, roasted potatoes, stuffed cabbage, beetroot and lettuce salad with horseradish and sour cream, fresh fruit or sweet such as *baklava*.
- Snacks: sweet (walnut) or savory pastry (*burek*); homemade fruit jam (*slatko*) of quince, grape, or cherry offered on teaspoon with water when guests visit.
- Turkish coffee is served on most social occasions.
- Many bars and cafes are there for socializing; many eating places specialize in traditional food such as *burek* (savory pastries) or grilled meats.
- International fast food chains are located in shopping malls in towns; Italian restaurants are opening up.

Cucumber Salad (Tarator)

Tarator is a traditional appetizer, served with fresh bread and feta-like sharp white goat's or sheep's cheese (*sirenje*).

2 cucumbers, washed and sliced very thin
1 TBS salt
2 cups plain yogurt
3 cloves garlic, crushed, then minced fine
1 ounce walnut meats, crushed
2 TBS parsley, minced

Place cucumbers in a bowl and sprinkle with salt.
Let stand for 10 minutes, then drain.
In a separate bowl, mix yogurt, garlic, walnuts, and parsley.
Blend all ingredients together in a serving bowl.
Chill for 20–30 minutes before serving.

Eggplant Salad (Pindzhur)

This is a traditional Macedonian starter, of which there are many variations. It is also served with fresh bread and *sirinje* or *brinza* (another sharp white) cheese.

1 pound tomatoes, whole
3 fresh green bell peppers, cored and halved
1 large eggplant, stalk intact
salt and black pepper to taste
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
3 TBS olive oil

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Place tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant in a baking pan (peppers with skin up).
Bake uncovered for about 40–50 minutes or until peppers are blistered and eggplant and tomatoes collapse into themselves. Cool slightly.
Peel tomatoes and peppers. Make a slit in the eggplant and scoop out all the flesh with a spoon (do not worry if some skin goes along with it).
Chop together or put into a food processor and blend in two or three quick bursts.
Add salt and garlic and give it one more burst.
Before serving heat oil slightly (5–10 seconds at low in the microwave).
Place mixture in a serving bowl, pour oil and stir.

Meatballs (Kjoftinja)

These Turkish-influenced meatballs are a common dish, more popularly made with lamb. These are served with mashed or fried potatoes, with a vegetable dish or salad for a midday or evening meal. Sour cream is usually served on the side.

1 pound ground beef (turkey, pork, or chicken)
1 onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 TBS fresh or ¼ tsp dried oregano
1 TBS fresh or ¼ tsp dried mint
2 slices stale bread, crumbled
½ cup milk or water
1 egg, beaten
flour
vegetable oil

In a large bowl, mix meat, onion, garlic, salt, pepper, oregano, and mint.
In a small bowl let bread soften in milk or water for 10–15 minutes.
Stir egg and bread into meat mixture.
Mix thoroughly and shape into golf-size balls.
Roll meatballs in flour; shake off excess.
Heat about 1 inch of oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
Fry meatballs without crowding, turning them to brown on all sides.
Keep fried meatballs warm in a low oven, absorbing excess oil on paper towels.
Place the meatballs in a warmed covered serving dish.
Serve with mashed potatoes and vegetable dishes.

Stuffed Peppers (Polneti Piperki)

Peppers are widely grown, finding their way into salads and many vegetable dishes. Serve these together with a meat dish and mashed or fried potatoes for dinner.

5 green bell peppers (4 kept whole, 1 finely chopped)
a large pot of boiling salted water
3 TBS butter
1 onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 8-ounce can tomato puree
½ cup smoked lean bacon or ham
salt and pepper to taste
2 cups bread crumbs
2 eggs, beaten

Slice the top end (the stem end) off each whole pepper, leaving a cylinder. Remove core and seeds; rinse.
In the pot of boiling water, parboil peppers for 5 minutes, remove and drain.
In a skillet over medium heat, melt butter; sauté onion until translucent.
Stir in garlic and chopped pepper; cook until pepper is soft.
Stir in tomato puree and smoked meat; season to taste with salt and pepper.
Lower heat to lowest possible and simmer for 10 minutes.
Turn off heat; stir in bread crumbs (reserve 2 tablespoons for sprinkling) and eggs.
Fill pepper shells with mixture.
Sprinkle tops with crumbs.
Bake in the oven at 350°F for 25–35 minutes or until stuffing is well browned.

Rice Pudding (Sutlijash)

This is a Turkish-influenced sweet served with the main meal.

4 cups milk
⅔ cup sugar
1 TBS unsalted butter
rind of 1 lemon (cut, not grated)
1 stick cinnamon
4 cups water
a pinch of salt
½ cup short-grain white rice, washed and drained
3 egg yolks, beaten until frothy, in a small bowl
1 TBS ground cinnamon, ¼ cup toasted almonds flakes for garnish

Slowly warm the milk, sugar, butter, lemon rind, and cinnamon to blood heat. Set aside for half an hour.
Bring water to a boil in another pan.
Add salt and rice to water, reduce the heat to lowest possible; simmer until rice is tender, for about 15 minutes.
Remove rice from heat. Drain.
Stir rice into milk mixture. Simmer uncovered over medium heat.

Stir rice frequently until thickened, for about 20 minutes.
Discard lemon rind and cinnamon.
Turn down the heat under the rice mixture to lowest possible.
Take ½ cup of the hot rice mixture and stir slowly into the yolks.
Pour the yolk and rice mixture into the rest of the pudding.
Stir continuously, until the pudding thickens, for about 5 minutes.
Turn off heat and let cool to room temperature.
Spoon pudding into glass or other pretty dessert bowls.
Sprinkle with cinnamon and toasted almonds and serve.

MADAGASCAR

An island nation with a unique ecology off the coast of southern Africa, Madagascar was settled originally by people from Southeast Asia and, later, Africa. From the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, Madagascar was a protectorate of France. The climate is tropical along the coast and cooler toward the central mountain range; the south is arid.

The population mostly consists of subsistence farmers raising many varieties of rice, fruits, and vegetables. Madagascar is a major source for the vanilla bean, and many dishes feature vanilla flavoring. The population is largely Christian with a Muslim minority.

Malagasy cuisine has French, African, Indian, and Malay influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice (many types grown locally, including red, white, and black varieties), *zebu* (beef).
- Pork, fish, seafood (mangrove crab, mussel, sea urchin, oyster, shrimp, lobster), chicken, duck, turkey, eggs, wild game.
- Cassava, corn, taro, sweet potato, potato, beans (including unusual round Bambara beans, also known as groundnuts, or *Voandzeia subterranea*).
- French-influenced baguette.
- Banana (many types), mango, coconut, oranges, pineapple, peanut, lychee, peach, apricot, grape, passion fruit, star fruit, many tropical fruits, strawberry.
- Seasonings: vanilla, ginger, garlic, clove, pepper, cinnamon (all locally grown), coconut milk (for coastal dishes), curry powder. A table condiment is *sakay*, a hot chili sauce (not used for cooking).

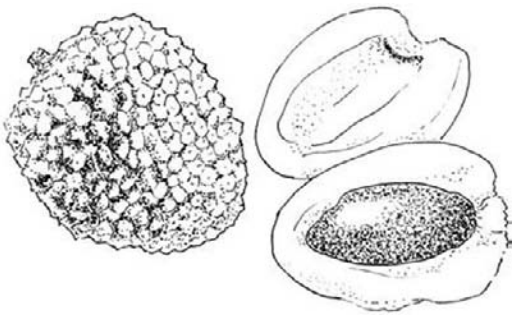
Typical Dishes

- Clear soups and stews of mostly green vegetables or legumes with a little meat.
- French-influenced dishes: beef cooked in garlic or green onions as a *confit* (potted or preserved meat), roast breast of duck, *foie gras* (goose liver).
- Malay-Indonesian-influenced dishes of vegetables, fish, or seafood cooked in coconut sauce.
- Poultry dishes: chicken clear soup (bouillon) flavored with ginger; duck in vanilla and tomato sauce.
- Sun-dried meat or fish (*kitoza*).

- Seafood dishes: fried fish or small shrimps; French-influenced cream sauce with lobster, shrimps.
- Indian-influenced dishes: side dishes or relishes (*achard*) of curry-flavored vegetables.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Food is served on a mat on the floor. In cities individual plates are used; the eating utensil is a large spoon but no knives or forks are used. There are no courses as such.
- Malagasy people eat light dishes (leafy vegetables, beans, and little or lean beef) every day; rich dishes (with pork, fatty beef, or coconut milk) for weekends, celebrations, and holidays.
- Rice is eaten at all meals, but rice varies in consistency from soft to dry, to complement accompanying dish. Dry dishes go with softer rice.
- Vegetables, in the form of salads, soups, and stews, are almost always served with one or another of the many varieties of rice.
- Breakfast: traditionally, soft-cooked rice and dried beef (*kitoza*). In urban areas, baguette or other bread, butter, honey, jam, hot drinks (coffee, tea, milk, chocolate). Recent trend is small sweet rice cakes (*mofogasy*) with coffee.



LYCHEE

- Lunch: rice; clear beef soup with greens (*romazava*); tomato and green onion relish; curried mixed vegetables; mango or other fruit in season.
- Dinner: rice; pork stew with cassava leaves (*ravitoto*); hot chili paste; fruit salad or banana fritters.
- Snacks: sweet steamed rice and fruitcakes wrapped in banana leaves (*koba ravina*); grilled skewered beef (*masikita*); Indian-style filled pastries (*samossa*).
- Desserts: sweet fritters of banana or sweet potato; tropical fruit salad; rice cakes.
- Drinks: citronella tea; burnt rice tea (*ranovola* or *ranon'ampango*); tropical fruit juices; palm toddy; local beer, rum, wine from local fruits and grapes.

Beef Soup with Greens (Romazava)

This is the national soup, whose name translates as "clear soup." This is ideally made with seven kinds of greens, and among them must be a "hot" or "prickly" vegetable (*brède mafana*), the Para (Brazilian) cress, for which watercress is a poor substitute.

2 TBS oil
2 pounds stewing beef, cubed
1 clove garlic, minced
1 onion, finely chopped
1 inch fresh ginger, sliced into julienne strips

(*continued*)

1 tomato, diced
salt and pepper to taste
water
1 pound mixed green vegetables (watercress, spinach, Chinese cabbage, chard, pea shoots), washed and cut into 1-inch slices

In a saucepan over medium heat, heat oil and quickly sear the beef.
Add garlic, onion, ginger, and tomato; season with salt and pepper.
Add water to completely cover the meat.
Allow to boil for about 10 minutes, skimming continuously.
Lower the heat to lowest possible; cover and simmer for 1 hour or until tender.
Add greens except for watercress; cook for another 10 minutes. Add watercress just before serving to preserve its peppery flavor.
Serve with white rice, a tomato relish, and a hot pepper relish.

Stewed Pork and Cassava Leaves (Ravitoto sy Henakisoa)

This is another national favorite. The African influence is evident in the use of cassava leaves, for which spinach has been substituted here. Some South American stores may carry frozen cassava leaves. Serve this with rice and side dishes of tomato relish and other vegetables for dinner.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 stalks fresh thyme
2 pounds boneless pork shoulder and belly, cubed
1 TBS tomato paste
salt and pepper to taste
water
1 pound frozen spinach, defrosted and pureed in blender
2 cups coconut milk, unsweetened

Heat oil over medium heat and fry the onion until translucent. Add garlic and thyme and fry until fragrant. Transfer to a small bowl.
Add 1 more TBS oil if necessary. Increase heat and brown the meat in the hot oil, stirring frequently for 4–5 minutes.
Stir in tomato paste; continue to cook for 2 more minutes.
Season with salt and pepper to taste.
Add water to cover the meat; cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 45 minutes or until pork is very tender.
Stir in pureed spinach and coconut milk.
Simmer for 5–7 minutes.
Serve with side dishes of tomato relish and other vegetables.

Chicken with Garlic and Ginger (Akoho sy Sakamalao)

The combination of garlic and ginger in this dish is typical of Malagasy flavoring. Serve with rice, accompanied by a soup or a vegetable dish for a midday or evening meal.

8 large chicken drumsticks or 4 quarters, skin removed, flesh slashed in several places
2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated
6 cloves garlic, finely minced
¼ tsp salt
oil

Rub ginger, garlic, and salt into the chicken.
Leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes or longer, refrigerated in a covered container.
In a skillet over low heat, slowly heat enough oil for shallow-frying.
Fry chicken, covered, until done, for about 45 minutes.
Turn chicken to cook all sides evenly.
Serve hot.

Shredded Beef (Varenga)

Cattle have a mystical value in Malagasy life, and the meat of the zebu, a type of African cow, is commonly eaten. Serve this Malagasy jerky with rice cooked slightly soft and one or more vegetable dishes or relishes for an evening meal.

1½ pounds boneless beef, cut in small pieces
2 level TBS salt
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 onion, sliced
water to cover

In a large saucepan, place beef, salt, garlic, and onion.
Add water to cover meat.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Lower heat and simmer for 2 hours, or until meat can be shredded with a fork. Add more water if necessary during cooking period.
Shred meat and transfer to a 7 × 11-inch baking dish.
Bake in a 400°F oven for ½ hour, or until meat is browned.

Rice and Vegetables (Vary Amin'Anana)

This dish makes a complete but light meal for lunch. It can be served accompanied by another vegetable dish or relish.

2 TBS oil
¼ pound ground beef
1 tomato, cut in ½-inch chunks
4 scallions, cut in 1-inch pieces
¼ pound mustard greens, chopped
¼ pound spinach, chopped

(*continued*)

¼ pound watercress, cut in small pieces
1 cup water
½ cup rice, uncooked
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper

In a covered saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Brown meat, stirring frequently.
Add tomato and scallions, and reduce heat.
Stir in greens; cook until greens soften (5–10 minutes).
Add water, rice, salt, and pepper.
Cover pot and simmer on lowest heat until rice is thoroughly cooked and all the liquid is absorbed, for about 20–25 minutes.
Adjust seasoning and serve hot.

Tomato and Green Onion Relish (Lasary Voatabia)

This relish is a table accompaniment for soups or stews.

½ cup green onions, chopped fine
1 cup diced tomatoes
1 TBS water
1 tsp salt
⅛ tsp chili flakes

Mix all ingredients in a bowl.
Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
Divide into four small bowls, one for each diner, and serve with the main dish.

Hot Pepper Sauce (Sakay)

Although this sauce is a frequent table accompaniment to most dishes, Malagasy food is not peppery hot, and this sauce is not used for cooking. The original recipe for this sauce uses several kinds of chili peppers.

2 fresh red chili peppers, cored and seeded (or 5–7 drops prepared chili sauce, e.g., *Tabasco*)
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 garlic cloves, crushed
5 (or more) TBS oil

Place all ingredients in a food processor or blender.
Process until pureed, adding more oil if needed.
Place in a small bowl as an accompaniment to dishes.

Fruit Salad (Salady Voankazo)

The range of many excellent fruits makes fruits and fruit salad the natural choice for dessert. A Malagasy touch is the use of locally grown vanilla during preparation and then again just before serving.

1 small, fresh, ripe pineapple, cut in 1-inch cubes
1 cup oranges, peeled, white parts discarded, and very thinly sliced
½ cup lychee pulp (or substitute pulp of canned lychees)
½ cup sugar
½ cup water
¼ tsp salt
2 TBS lemon juice
2 TBS vanilla extract

Combine all fruits in a bowl and mix well.
Bring sugar, water, salt, and lemon juice at a rolling boil for 1 minute.
Remove from heat.
Add vanilla extract to the syrup.
Pour the piping hot syrup over the fruit.
Chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour.
Before serving, sprinkle some more vanilla extract on each serving.

MALAWI

Malawi is a long, narrow landlocked country in southern Africa. The terrain is rolling hills, dipping down toward Lake Malawi. In the high plateaus, the climate is cool subtropical. Malawi was a British colony until the middle of the twentieth century.

Malawians are predominantly of the Chewa ethnic group, with minorities of Nyanja and Tumbuka. Although the majority are Christian, 15 percent are Muslims, largely in the north. Malawi cooking is simple and basic.

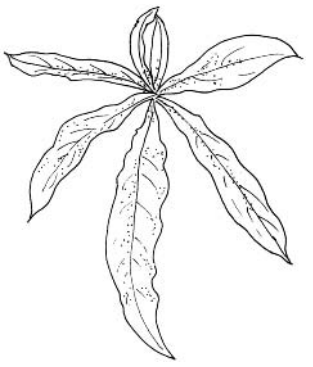
Foodstuffs

- Staple: cornmeal.
- Beef, goat, chicken, fresh-water fish, dried meat, wild game including birds.
- Potatoes (both sweet and white), cassava, sorghum, millet.
- Beans (many types), peas (cowpea, pigeon pea, chickpea), tomato, carrot, squash, cabbage, green vegetables (leaves of cassava, sweet potato, bean, pea).
- Banana, plantain, mango.
- Seasonings: tomato, onion, ground peanuts.

Styles of Eating

- One to three meals and snacks daily. (Note that meals without the staple cornmeal paste, no matter how filling or heavy, are considered snacks.)
- Hands are ritually washed with soap before and after eating by pouring water from a jug, oldest persons first. Other family members go around to assist. Families eat together, usually sitting on the floor or at a table. All share one common plate of cornmeal porridge (*nsima*) and one bowl of side dish.
- A piece of *nsima* is taken with the fingers of the right hand. This is slowly shaped with the same fingers and palm into a round ball. The ball is dipped into the side dish and brought to the mouth.
- It is considered polite to eat slowly and contribute to the conversation.
- Breakfast: thin cornmeal porridge with ground-up peanuts; tea.
- Lunch: *nsima*; green vegetable or pumpkin side dish.
- Dinner: *nsima*; fire-dried wild game or dried small fish.
- Drinks: tea; cornmeal drink commercially flavored with banana, chocolate, or orange (*mahewu*), or homemade; ginger ale and other international

bottled drinks; home-brewed beer; local vodka and coffee liqueur.
- Snacks (homemade or sold in streets): corn on the cob, fresh fruits, cashew nuts.
- Western-style fast food such as burgers, pizza, and fried chicken are available in cities.



BAOBAB LEAF

Cornmeal Porridge (Nsima, Ufa)

Nsima is actually more of a thick paste and resembles very firm mashed potatoes when served. It is usually eaten twice a day at lunch and dinner. During shortages, or if unaffordable, *nsima* is eaten once a day: for dinner in the late afternoon. A side dish of greens or other vegetables is the usual accompaniment: pumpkin, pumpkin leaves, or other vegetables or meat. Small dried fish from the lake, beef, goat, wild game, or, for a celebration, chicken (the most expensive form of protein) can also be made into side dishes. It is usual for most people to have just one side dish for everyday family meals.

2 cups white cornmeal **4 cups water**

In a large saucepan, heat water until lukewarm.
Slowly trickle cornmeal (altogether about ⅔ cup) into the water, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon to make sure lumps do not form.
Bring to a boil, stirring continuously.
Reduce heat, cover, and let simmer gently for 3–5 minutes.
The mixture will thicken to look like a thin transparent porridge.
Sprinkle the remaining cornmeal, a spoonful at a time, stirring continuously.
Keep stirring until the *nsima* is smooth and well cooked.
Let rest, covered, for 2–3 minutes.
Arrange *nsima* in three (or more) large mounds on a warmed serving platter.
Place in the middle of the table or on a cloth on the floor and serve.

Cabbage in Peanut Sauce (Kutendela)

The usual vegetables made into a side dish are the top young leaves (shoots) from cassava, squash, pumpkin, bean, or sweet potato plants. Greens gathered from the wild (ferns, baobab leaves) are also commonly cooked. Other greens such as collards, kale, spinach, or Chinese cabbage may be used. *Kutendela* is peanut powder, here substituted by readily available peanut butter.

1 TBS oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 large tomato, diced
1 pound cabbage, shredded
1 cup water

(*continued*)

1 cup peanut butter (unsweetened if possible), in a small bowl
¼ cup warm water
salt to taste

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onion and fry until softened.
Add tomato and fry for 2–3 minutes.
Add cabbage and 1 cup water, stirring well.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat.
Dilute peanut butter with warm water and stir well into cabbage (add a bit more water if necessary, but do not thin the peanut sauce; it should be like thick gravy).
Taste the peanut sauce, adding salt if necessary.
Keep stirring until peanut sauce boils and cabbage is tender, for about 7–10 more minutes.
Place in one large or two small bowls.
Serve hot with *nsima*.

Sweet Potato Biscuits (Mbatata)

These sweet snacks in between meals are most likely to be made in urban areas.

4 TBS butter
¼ cup milk
¾ cup cooked, mashed sweet potato
1¼ cups sifted flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a small saucepan, melt butter in the milk.
Pour over sweet potato and mix thoroughly.
Combine flour, baking powder, and salt, and blend into sweet potato mixture.
Turn out onto a floured surface.
Knead lightly and roll out ½-inch thick.
Cut out with a cookie cutter.
Lightly grease a baking sheet.
Place biscuits without crowding; bake for 15 minutes or until golden.
Serve warm or cold.

Peanut Puffs (Mtedza)

This is a common street food, sold from street stalls or by vendors in the cities.

½ cup butter
2 TBS sugar
¾ cup finely chopped peanuts
½ tsp vanilla
1 cup flour
powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 325°F.
Cream butter and sugar.
Stir in peanuts, vanilla, and flour.
With floured hands, roll into marble-sized balls.
Place without crowding on a lightly greased baking sheet.
Bake 20–25 minutes or until lightly golden.
Remove from oven and, while still hot, roll in powdered sugar.

Banana Fritters (Zitumbuwa)

Bananas are plentiful and often made into snacks.

3 ripe bananas, mashed
1 pinch salt
1 tsp sugar
½ cup white cornmeal or flour
oil for frying

Mix bananas well with the salt, sugar, and cornmeal or flour.
Heat over medium heat about ⅛ inch of oil in a skillet.
Place 4–5 spoonfuls of the mixture to fry in the hot oil.
Turn over when golden brown, and fry for another 2–3 minutes more.
Drain on paper towels; serve hot or cold.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia, a constitutional monarchy in Southeast Asia, was a British colony until independence in 1957. Its coastal plains have a tropical and humid climate that favor rice and coconut production while the milder temperatures in the hills and mountains are ideal for tea. The coasts provide abundant fish and seafood.

The population is divided among Malays (about 40 percent), Chinese, and Indians, mostly descendants of plantation workers brought in by colonial British. Islam is the dominant religion; Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Christianity are also practiced.

In general, peninsular Malaysian food is similar to Indonesian food in the use of many spices, hot chilies, and coconut milk, but with more pronounced Indian and Chinese elements. Mixed marriages between Chinese and Malays resulted in a distinctive style of cooking called *nyonya*, combining Malay and Chinese elements. This style of cooking is prevalent in neighboring Singapore as well. The cooking in northern Malaysia (close to Thailand) reflects the fiery hot, sweet, and sour tastes of Thai cuisine. Eastern Malaysian cooking, that is, that of diverse indigenous ethnic groups (Iban, Kenyah, Bidayoh, Penan, Kelabit, etc.), is different from the rest of Malaysia.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, noodles.
- Indian-style flat breads (*roti*).
- Fish, seafood, chicken, pork (not for Muslims), beef (not for Hindus), eggs.
- Long beans, eggplant, squash, okra, leafy greens, various gourds, bitter melon, various types of Chinese cabbage, Chinese flowering broccoli.
- Soybean products (tofu, soy sauce, fermented black beans).
- Seasoning: wide range of spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, coriander, cumin, cardamom, star anise, turmeric, etc.), tamarind, hot chilies; *sambal belachan* (chili and shrimp paste, an indispensable table condiment).
- Drinks: rose syrup drinks with milk or lemon; tea; coffee; fruit juices; coconut water. Alcoholic drinks for non-Muslim indigenous groups in Sabah and Sarawak—*tapai* (rice beer) and *leheng* (sweet toddy).

Typical Dishes

- Curried stews of chicken, meat, and vegetables with or without coconut milk.
- Roast or grilled meats: roast suckling pig (for non-Muslims), roast duck, charcoal-grilled skewered chicken pieces (*satay*) with spicy peanut sauce.
- Soups of meat, seafood, and vegetables: pork and herb soup (*bak kut teh*).
- Noodles with or without soup: spicy noodles with meat, fish, or seafood with or without coconut milk (*laksa Penang*); fried noodles with seafood (*char kuay teow*).
- Fish and seafood: hot and sour fish (*ikan asam pedas*), chili-vinegar marinated fish (*acar kunyit ikan*).
- Vegetable dishes: blanched vegetables with shrimp paste dressing (*lalap, pecal*).
- Rice dishes: cooked in coconut milk (*nasi lemak*), with assorted herbs and shredded fish (*nasi ulam*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Muslim Malaysians and Indians eat with their right hand or with a fork and spoon. Chinese Malays use chopsticks or fork and spoon. The spoon is used to convey food to the mouth while the fork pushes food onto the spoon.
- Breakfast: rice porridge eaten with Chinese-style fried bread; noodles with meat or fish and vegetables, usually eaten out.
- Lunch: noodles or filled *roti* (Indian flat breads) or *satay* with compressed rice (*ketupat*), commonly from street stalls.
- Dinner: rice with two to three side dishes of soup, meat or fish, and a vegetable dish; fresh fruit.
- Eating out, especially at hawker stalls (as mobile food stalls are called) or small food shops, is very common. These shops specialize in foods that are difficult to make at home because of elaborate ingredients and techniques. Snacks such as noodles or sweet coconut and rice cakes are also available here. Hawker stalls are set up at night in empty parking lots and are open till very late.

Fried Noodles with Seafood
(Char Kuay Teow, *also* Char Kuoi Teow)

This dish is typical of Penang or northern peninsular Malaysia and combines Chinese noodles and sausage with native Malay preference for fiery chilies. *Char kuay teow* has spread throughout the entire country, as well as neighboring Singapore (where it is known as fried *meehon*). The best are usually sold from hawker stalls or small family-owned shops.

Hot chili is not incorporated into the noodles in this recipe, as in the authentic dish. Rather, each diner may add a few drops of belachan and chili sauce at the table, if desired. Any combination of seafood is fine, or use all squid or clams. Serve as a snack, as the main dish for a light meal, or as one of several side dishes for a heavier meal, either lunch or dinner.

1 pound dry flat rice noodles
2 TBS thick or dark soy sauce
3 TBS regular soy sauce
2 TBS water
3 TBS peanut oil
3–4 cloves garlic, minced
1 dried Chinese sausage (*lap seong*), sliced thin, diagonally
2 cups fresh medium shrimp, shelled
2 cups fresh squid, cut into rings
2–3 eggs
salt and white pepper
1 cup fresh clams or cockles, shelled
3 cups bean sprouts
½ cup fresh chives, sliced into 1-inch lengths
chili sauce (Tabasco or similar), to add at the table

Put the noodles into a large bowl. Pour boiling water to cover and leave to reconstitute for 3–5 minutes; they should still be firm as they will be cooked further. Drain and set aside.
Prepare garlic and belachan sauce (recipe follows), and set aside.
Mix the two types of soy sauce with water; set aside.
In a large wok or skillet, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir-fry garlic until fragrant. Add sausage; stir-fry for 1 minute.
Add shrimp and squid; stir-fry until just opaque, no longer.
Add noodles and increase heat, mixing noodles and seafood well, for about 2–3 minutes.
Add 3–4 tablespoons of soy sauce mixture; stir-fry for another 3 minutes.
Clear a space in the center of the wok, pushing noodles and seafood to the sides.
Pour in 2 tablespoons oil to heat.
Break eggs into oil; season with salt and pepper, and quickly scramble for 1–2 minutes.
Add clams, then more soy sauce mixture. Mix thoroughly.
Increase heat as high as possible to allow noodles to get crisp, stir-frying for 5 minutes.
Add bean sprouts and chives; stir-fry for 2 more minutes, just enough to heat vegetables.
Remove from heat. Divide into 4 plates.
Pass belachan and chili sauce for diners to add as desired.

Belachan and Chili Sauce

2 TBS peanut oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS *belachan*, fish sauce, or anchovy sauce
1 tsp sugar
2 TBS water
chili sauce (optional)

Heat oil over medium heat in a skillet.
Stir in garlic and fry until fragrant.
Add *belachan* and sugar, stirring until sugar dissolves.
Stir in water; simmer for another 5 minutes.
Remove from heat, and stir in chili sauce to taste, if desired.

HOT AND COLD FOODS

A common belief about foods, particularly prominent in Southeast and south Asia, asserts that foods have an inherent spiritual heat. In order to keep ourselves healthy, these foods must be balanced. Hot foods such as chilies or meat must be balanced with cold foods such as mangoes or certain types of greens. This underlying belief sometimes dictates the choices of menus. It is particularly adhered to with people who are considered vulnerable to health problems: pregnant women, the ill, young children, and the elderly. Rice, in this system, is always healthy, as it is completely neutral.

Mixed Fruit Salad (Rojak Buah)

The fruits and vegetables used in this salad can vary depending on what is in season. Use under-ripe fruit: pears, peaches, and plums are fine substitutes for papaya and star fruit. This is a dish that is also prepared in Indonesia and Singapore. In Malaysia, an Indian variation of *rojak* is made with fritters and soy bean curd, served with the same sweet-spicy sauce. Serve as a side dish. (See box "Hot and Cold Foods.")

- 1 unripe mango, peeled, diced
- 1 grapefruit, pomelo or 2 large oranges, segmented and sliced
- 1 cucumber, peeled, diced
- 1 jicama, peeled, diced
- 1 star fruit, thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 small medium-ripe papaya, peeled, diced
- 2 tart apples, peeled, cored, and diced, squeezed with 2 TBS lemon juice to deter browning

Place all prepared ingredients into a serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate. Pour dressing over the salad. Mix well before serving.

Spicy Dressing

- 1 TBS *trasi* or shrimp paste (wrapped in foil and grilled under a hot grill for 1–2 minutes until aromatic)
- 1 tsp fish sauce or anchovy sauce (alternatively, omit *trasi* and use altogether 2 TBS fish sauce)
- 2 TBS brown sugar
- ½ cup roasted peanuts, chopped coarsely (or substitute crunchy peanut butter)
- 1 TBS tamarind pulp mixed into 2 TBS water (or 2 TBS lemon juice)
- a few drops chili sauce (Tabasco or similar)

Prepare dressing by blending together all the ingredients until smooth.

Red-Cooked Chicken (Ayam Masak Merah)

The name of this dish comes from its thick red gravy, authentically made with many fresh red chilies, here substituted by sweet peppers. This is eaten with plain rice or flat Indian-style bread, called *roti*, for lunch or dinner.

4 TBS oil
2-inch cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
1 star anise
2 onions, quartered
2 large potatoes, scraped and cubed
½ cup tomato paste
2 large tomatoes, quartered
4 large chicken portions, quarters or whole legs
1 cup water
3 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped fine
salt
sugar (optional)

Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat.
Stir-fry spice mixture (recipe follows) until fragrant.
Add cinnamon, cloves, and star anise; stir-fry for 2 minutes.
Stir in onions, potatoes, tomato paste, and tomatoes; stir-fry for 3–5 minutes.
Add chicken, mixing well; add water. Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to simmer for 1 hour until chicken is tender and sauce is very thick.
Stir occasionally and add a bit (no more than ¼ cup at a time) of water if the sauce gets too thick.
Ten minutes before the chicken is done, stir in bell peppers.
Taste and season with salt (and sugar if desired).
Serve hot.

Spice Mixture

10 shallots
4 cloves garlic
1 red chili, cored, seeded (optional)
2-inch piece ginger, peeled and sliced
2 TBS coriander
1 tsp cumin

Process all the ingredients in a food processor until smooth.

Meat Pastries (Murtabak, Murtaba, *also* Martaba)

These fried meat pastries are common in Malaysia and are sold at *mamak* (Muslim Indian) shops specializing in *roti* (flat bread). The pastries are also common in neighboring Singapore, Indonesia, and even Thailand. Originally Indian but adapted to Malay taste, these pastries are made with flair on large iron griddles in street stalls. The ideal *murtabak* has a crisp pastry, which is chewy and tender inside, enclosing spicy fillings of egg, chicken, or beef. These pastries are eaten as a snack or appetizer, or as a quick lunch. Variations of this are also eaten throughout India and the Middle East.

1 pound flour
¾ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
¼ tsp baking powder
4 eggs, beaten
1½ cups water

4 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 egg, lightly beaten
4 or more TBS oil or ghee for frying
4 TBS cilantro for garnish
2–3 fresh chilies, seeded and sliced into rings (optional)

Sift flour into a bowl with salt, pepper, and baking powder.
Mix in eggs and add water to make dough.
Knead in bowl for 5 minutes, then on a floured surface for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Form into a ball, brush with oil, and leave in a bowl, covered with a damp towel, overnight.
Divide dough into four equal portions.
Roll out very thinly on an oiled surface.
Spread each liberally with ghee. Fold over into compact balls.
Cover balls with a damp cloth. Set aside for ½ hour.
Roll out each ball into a thin rectangle.
Place filling evenly in the center of each piece. Pat lightly beaten egg over meat.
Quickly bring corners of dough over, sides first, then top and bottom, to seal into a square.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a skillet over medium-high heat.
Panfry pastry one at a time till light brown on both sides.
Serve hot, garnished with cilantro and chilies (if using).

Filling

2 TBS oil
1 pound ground meat (mutton or beef)
½ tsp turmeric powder
¾ tsp salt
2 onions, minced

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a wok.
Stir in meat, ¼ teaspoon turmeric, and ½ teaspoon salt, frying until brown.
Remove and set aside.
Add the remaining oil to the wok. Sauté onions until golden. Add the remaining salt and turmeric powder.
Remove from heat; add to meat mixture.
Mix spice mixture (recipe follows) thoroughly into the meat and onion mixture.

Spice Mixture

seeds of 20 cardamom pods
2 TBS coriander seeds
l TBS aniseed

In a skillet, dry fry the spices for 3–5 minutes over medium heat, until fragrant.
Process spices in a food processor or blender until fine.

Sweet Coconut Rice Balls (Onde Onde)

Most desserts and snacks in Malaysia, as in all of Southeast Asia, are made of coconut and glutinous rice, usually flavored with the sweet scent of pandan (screwpine) leaf, which also imparts its green color, being a natural food dye. The brown sugar filling melts into a syrup during cooking, and "explodes" in the mouth as the diner bites into the *onde onde*.

1½ cups glutinous rice flour
½ cup coconut milk
¼ cup lukewarm water
pandan or screwpine leaf flavoring (available from Asian stores; omit food coloring if using)
2–3 drops green food coloring
8 tsp dark brown sugar
1 cup fresh grated coconut (or substitute equivalent dry grated coconut moistened with ¼ cup coconut milk), mixed with ¼ tsp salt, steamed over boiling water for 5 minutes

Mix rice flour with coconut milk, water, and pandan flavoring (or food coloring) into a firm but elastic dough.
Shape rice dough into 1-inch balls (you should get about thirty).
Push a thumb into the center of each ball and fill the cavity with ¼ tsp brown sugar.
Seal, and roll back into shape with the palms of your hands.
Bring a large pot of water to a boil.
Slip balls into water, only a few at a time. Do not crowd the pan. Keep water at a steady simmer.
When balls float to the surface, continue to let them cook for at least 2 more minutes (to make sure the sugar filling melts), then remove with a slotted spoon and roll in grated coconut.
Serve warm or at room temperature as a snack or dessert.

MALDIVES

The Maldives comprises over 1,000 low-lying islands in the Indian Ocean. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the islands came under Portuguese, Dutch, and British control, eventually becoming independent in 1965. With a flat terrain and scarce land for cultivation, locally produced food consists of fish, seafood, coconuts, and some fruits and vegetables; most food is imported.

The Maldivian population originates from South India, Sri Lanka, and Arabia, and are predominantly Muslim. The cuisine is very similar to those of South India and Sri Lanka, centering on fish and seafood, flavored with curry spices and coconut milk. There are elaborate dishes dating to a long-reigning royal (sultanate) court.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, fish.
- Fish and seafood of all kinds: yellow fin tuna, lobster, crab, shrimps.
- Beef (not pork, because it is not allowed for Muslims), chicken eaten on special occasions; eggs.
- Okra, eggplant, gourds, cassava, potato, tomato.
- Coconut, mango, papaya.
- Seasonings: chili pepper, coconut, range of curry spices (fennel, cumin, coriander), curry leaf (*Murraya koenigii*), pandan leaf (screwpine); *sambol* and *mallung* are hot, spicy mixtures of fresh herbs, chilies, and coconut table relishes.

CURRY LEAF

Typical Dishes

- Fish dishes: deep-fried tuna and coconut balls (*gula*), fish curry, fish soup.
- Beef curry.
- Rice-based dishes (*biriyanee*).
- Sweets: coconut and rice-based sweets.

- Drinks: fresh coconut milk, fresh fruit juices (mango, papaya, pineapple), coconut toddy (*raa*), milky drinks (*kiri sarbat*).
- After-dinner chew: areca (betel) nut with pepper leaf, cloves, and lime.

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: rice pancakes (*appa*), sometimes with egg in the center; stringhoppers (rice pancake batter forced out as noodles and steamed); tea.
- Lunch: hoppers with lentil curry and spicy sauce (*sambol*). Fresh fruit for dessert.
- Dinner: rice, fish dish, vegetable curry. Fresh mango or papaya for dessert.
- Snacks: savory or sweet hoppers (*miti kiri appa*) made with coconut milk and brown palm sugar (*jaggery*).

Gourd Relish (Chichandaa Satani)

This fresh relish, using a common Maldivian vegetable, may be served as a salad or as an accompaniment to fried fish (see the next recipe) for a midday or evening meal. Excellent substitutes are zucchini or cucumber.

1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 green chili pepper, minced (optional)
½ cup coconut milk
½ pound baby snake gourd (available from Asian stores), or 1 zucchini, peeled, sliced very fine
juice of 1 lime
salt to taste

In a bowl, mix onion, chili, lime juice, and salt.
Stir in coconut milk.
Add gourd, mixing thoroughly.
Adjust seasoning, and let stand for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Deep-Fried Fish (Theluli Mas)

The original recipe uses fresh tuna. Substitute any sea fish in season, such as mackerel, or a fresh-water fish such as trout. This is served with rice and a fresh vegetable relish for a midday or evening meal.

1 medium dried chili, cored and seeded, soaked 20 minutes in warm water, then drained (optional)
1 onion, chopped
5 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp cumin
2 curry leaves (*Murraya koenigii*, optional)
2 tsp whole black peppercorns
salt to taste
1½ pounds fresh fish fillet
oil for deep-frying

In a blender or food processor, blend the chili, onion, garlic, cumin, curry leaves, peppercorns, and salt to a smooth paste.
Spread fish with the spice paste.
Keep refrigerated in a covered dish for 30 minutes.
In a frying pan, heat oil until hot.
Deep-fry fish until crisp and golden brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Onion Flat Bread (Fiyaa Roshi)

This flat bread is similar to those made all over India, but has a distinctive flavoring ingredient incorporated into the dough. This is best eaten as soon as made, as it does not keep well.

1 medium onion, finely sliced
1¼ cups warm (not hot) water
2 cups strong (bread) flour
salt to taste
½ cup coconut oil
flour for dusting

In a blender or food processor bowl, soak sliced onion in water for half an hour.
Blend onion till finely chopped. Drain, reserve the onion water, and keep solids aside.
Sift flour and salt into a bowl.
Add oil, a third of the onion water, and onion solids to make a dough, adding more water as required.
On a floured surface, knead thoroughly for a smooth and elastic dough.
Divide dough into twenty pieces; shape into balls.
Flour the work surface and roll each ball out to between ¼- and ⅛-inch thick. Cover rolled out bread with a moist towel to prevent drying out.
Over medium heat, warm a heavy nonstick skillet or frying pan until hot.
Cook the flat bread until lightly browned on both sides. Keep warm in the oven while making the rest.
Serve hot with a fish curry, stew, or soup.

Flavored Rice (Kaliyaa Birinjee)

This dish is eaten during Ramadan (Muslim month of daylight fasting) for breakfast. Traditionally, this dish was an offering sent to the rajah's (king's) court by island chiefs (see box "Ghee, Making and Use").

2 onions, sliced thin
2-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
4 cloves garlic, sliced thin
3 ounces ghee (clarified butter)

(*continued*)

2 sticks cinnamon, soaked in 1 TBS hot water
5 cardamoms, soaked in 1 TBS hot water
1 tsp fennel seed, soaked in 1 TBS hot water
2 cups long-grain rice, rinsed and drained
2 cups coconut milk, diluted with 2 cups warm water
2 curry leaves (*Murraya koenigii*, optional)
salt to taste

In a blender or food processor, blend to a paste the onions, ginger, and half the garlic. Set aside.
In a heavy saucepan, melt ghee over medium heat. Add water from soaking cinnamon, cardamom, and fennel seed. Increase heat and briskly stir until all the water has evaporated.
Stir in onion mixture, frying over high heat until onions are translucent.
Stir in cinnamon, cardamom, and the remaining garlic.
Add rice and stir-fry until rice is well coated with spices.
Stir in coconut milk, curry leaves, and salt to taste; bring to a boil.
Cover the pan, reduce heat to lowest and let simmer until rice is done, for about 20–25 minutes.
Remove from heat. Allow to rest for 10 minutes, then stir up rice to serve.

GHEE, MAKING AND USE

Clarified butter—ghee—is used as a cooking medium and flavoring agent throughout the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East. After butter is churned, the milk solids within the fat go bad fairly quickly. They also burn at low temperatures, making butter a poor cooking oil. Ghee was developed to counter these issues. It is made by heating butter from cow's milk over a low fire. Once the butter melts, heat is raised gradually until the water boils off. The butter is then allowed to cool. The semifluid, clear butterfat is poured off and stored as ghee. In the Middle East it is poured over rice as a flavoring; in parts of India it is the major cooking oil.

Beef Curry (Geri Riha)

Beef is an imported item, usually served for a special occasion, such as a family gathering. This is a mild curry that is served with rice, onion flat bread, and vegetable relish for an evening meal.

2 TBS coconut oil
1 onion, sliced fine
3 cloves garlic, sliced fine
2 curry leaves (*Murraya koenigii*, available from Indian stores)
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and halved (optional)
2 pieces *rampe* (pandanus) leaf (or substitute 3 drops pandanus

flavoring; both available from Asian stores)
1 pound beef, cubed
3 TBS coriander powder
½ cup coconut milk diluted with ½ cup warm water
salt to taste
½ cup coconut milk

In a saucepan over medium heat, heat oil. Sauté onion until translucent, then add garlic, curry leaves, chili and *rampe* leaf, continuing to fry until onions are golden brown.
Add beef, coriander, diluted coconut milk, and salt to taste.
Simmer until the meat is tender, for about 45–60 minutes.
Add coconut milk, adjust seasoning, and remove from heat.

Potato Curry (Kukulhu Bis Riha)

This curry is a popular and easy to make main dish.

2 TBS coconut oil
¾ cup onions, sliced fine
3 garlic cloves, sliced fine
3 curry leaves (*Murraya koenigii*, available from Indian stores) (optional)
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and halved (optional)
2 pieces *rampe* (pandanus) leaf (or substitute 3 drops pandanus flavoring; both available from Asian stores)
4 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered
½ cup coconut milk diluted with ½ cup warm water
3 TBS curry powder
salt to taste
4 eggs, hard-boiled and shelled
¼ cup coconut milk

Heat oil. Sauté onions until translucent; add garlic, curry leaves, chili, and *rampe* leaf, continuing to fry until onions are golden brown.
Add potatoes and brown lightly.
Add diluted coconut milk, curry powder, and salt to taste.
Simmer until potatoes are tender.
Add eggs and cook until sauce has thickened.
Add coconut milk, adjust seasoning, and remove from heat.
Serve hot with rice.

Fish and Potato Croquettes (Cutlus)

These are a British-influenced dish, served as a side dish with vegetables and rice.

2 onions, sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 small chili peppers, sliced (optional)

(*continued*)

salt to taste
juice of 2 limes
1 cup mashed potatoes
2 cans tuna flakes, drained
1 tsp black pepper
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup bread crumbs
oil for deep-frying

In a food processor or blender, finely chop onion, garlic, and chili with salt.
Add lime juice and mix well. Add mashed potato, tuna, and pepper.
Add sufficient egg to make a stiff mass.
Mix ingredients thoroughly.
Divide mixture into ½-inch balls; roll in bread crumbs.
In a frying pan over medium heat, heat oil. Deep-fry fish balls until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Custard Cream Sweet (Bis Haluvaa)

This is a rich creamy sweet, popular as dessert or snack, usually accompanied by tea.

6 eggs
1 8-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
½ cup ghee (clarified butter)

Butter an 8 × 10-inch baking dish.
Beat eggs with condensed milk.
Pour into the top half of a double boiler and cook, stirring frequently, over simmering water.
When thickened, add ghee, stirring continuously until the mixture starts to separate from the sides of the pot.
Transfer the mixture to the prepared dish, and smooth the top.
When thoroughly cool, cut into rectangles or lozenges (diamond shapes).
Refrigerate and serve cold.

MALI

A large landlocked country in central Africa, Mali was a center of Islamic learning for several centuries and famed for gold trading in the fourteenth century. It is the location of the fabled city of Timbuktu. A French colony from 1883, it became independent in 1960.

The terrain is rolling arid plains and rugged mountains, 40 percent of which is the Sahelian desert. In the subtropical and fertile south, rice, peanuts, and other crops are grown; fish is harvested from the Niger River.

There are several ethnic groups; predominant are the Bambara, Mandinka, Songhay, and Touareg. Most Malians are Muslim. Malian cuisine shows influences from Islamic, French, North African, and neighboring Senegalese cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: millet, corn, rice, sorghum, couscous (depending on region).
- Beef, goat, sheep, chicken, fresh or preserved fish.
- Dairy products: yogurt, milk, butter (for Touareg ethnic group).
- Potato (white and sweet), yams, onion, cassava, beans, peas, tomato, eggplant, okra, green leaves (baobab, sweet potato, bean).
- Banana, orange, watermelon, papaya, tamarind, shea nut.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, black pepper, ground peanut powder; Songhay ethnic group also uses anise, cinnamon, and bay leaves.

Typical Dishes

- Millet or other grain porridge (*to*) or couscous with sauces of peanuts, okra, or green vegetables and meat.
- Stews of vegetables (eggplant, onion, potato) with chicken or meat.
- Meat dishes: grilled goat or lamb, lamb in herb sauce (*fakoye*), meat and baobab leaves in peanut sauce (*naboulou*).
- Senegalese-influenced chicken dishes: chicken and vegetable stew (*kedjennou*), chicken with onions (*yassa*).
- Fish dishes: Nile perch with hot chili sauce, smoked fish in peanut sauce.

Styles of Eating

- One to three meals (depending on availability and affordability) a day.
- Food is eaten with the fingers of the right hand.
- Breakfast: thin porridge of fermented staple grain (cornmeal, millet, or sorghum) with or without peanut powder, with or without sugar.
- Lunch and dinner: staple paste (*to*) with or without vegetable sauce.
- Drinks: slightly fermented staple soaking water (*maheu*) with sugar; red hibiscus juice (*bissap*); watermelon juice; ginger drink; sweet tea (served Arabic style in tiny cups after meals); local millet beer (*dolo*) (see box "African Teas").

Rice and Black-Eyed Peas (Mo Dunguri)

This is adapted from a Songhay dish for an evening meal. Some Asian (East Indian) stores carry packets of ready-fried onions: these are a convenient substitute for frying the onion yourself. If using these, use only 2 tablespoons oil.

¼ cup oil
3 onions, chopped (or 2 cups ready-fried)
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 15-ounce cans black-eyed peas, drained
1 chicken bouillon cube
½ cup smooth peanut butter
1 dried red chili pepper, cored and seeded (optional)
1½ cups water
2 cups hot cooked rice

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Fry onions until golden brown. Set aside to drain on paper towels.
In the same oil, fry garlic until fragrant.
Add peas, bouillon, peanut butter, chili pepper, and water.
Cover the pan, bring to a boil, incorporating the peanut butter well into the liquid.
Reduce heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes, stirring to ensure the peanut sauce does not burn. Add up to ¼ cup water if needed.
Place ½ cup hot rice into each individual plate.
Sprinkle over a quarter of the fried onions.
Spoon some bean sauce alongside.
Serve hot.

Porridge (To) *with Two Sauces*

Lunch and dinner are built around a staple cereal—cornmeal, millet, sorghum, rice, or couscous—and served with a vegetable sauce, such as given below, or black-eyed pea sauce (see the previous recipe). If affordable, another sauce with meat, fish, or poultry is served alongside. The sauce is usually thickened with okra (also called ladies' fingers), for which cornstarch is substituted here. Although the cereal is conventionally called porridge, its consistency is more of a thick paste.

Vegetable Sauce

1 pound frozen spinach, defrosted and pureed in blender
2 medium onions, chopped coarsely
1 chicken bouillon cube
2 cups water
1 TBS cornstarch dissolved in 4 TBS water

Combine spinach, onions, bouillon, and water in a saucepan.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 10–15 minutes.
Stir in cornstarch slurry 5 minutes before end of cooking.
Mix thoroughly. If too thick, add ¼ cup water and continue cooking for 1–2 more minutes.
Serve hot.

Meat Sauce

2 TBS oil
1 pound beef, turkey, or chicken, diced
1 onion, chopped
3 level TBS tomato paste
½ level tsp salt
pepper
water
2 cups okra, chopped
2 cups water
a pinch of baking soda

In a saucepan, heat oil and fry meat for 2–3 minutes until it changes color.
Stir in onion; fry until softened.
Stir in tomato paste, salt, pepper, and water to cover.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 20–30 minutes, or until tender.
In a separate pan, bring to a boil the okra, water, and baking soda.
Reduce heat and simmer for 3–5 minutes until thick.
Stir into meat stew and simmer for another 2–3 minutes.
Serve hot.

Cornmeal Porridge

1½ pints simmering water
⅔ cup cornmeal (white, preferably)
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ level tsp salt

Into a pan of simmering water, slowly trickle the cornmeal and soda.
Add salt and cook until the mixture is thick, stirring constantly.
Reduce heat and simmer gently for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally until very thick.

Assembly

Place a portion of the porridge into each individual bowl.
Spoon vegetable sauce and meat sauce next to porridge, keeping them apart.
Alternatively, serve sauces in communal bowls for diners to help themselves.

Hibiscus Juice or Tea (Bissap)

This is a juice commonly drunk cold or hot as tea. Dried hibiscus flowers can be found in natural food stores. Another substitute is red hibiscus tea bags.

1 cup dark red, dried hibiscus flowers (or 4 hibiscus tea bags)
4 cups boiling water
½ cup (or more) sugar
4 sprigs fresh mint leaves
1 tsp vanilla

Into a heat-resistant pitcher or teapot, put flowers or tea bags.
Pour boiling water over and let steep for 10 minutes, covered.
Discard flowers or bags, pressing down on them well.
Stir in sugar, adjusting it to personal taste.
Serve hot as tea.
To serve as a cold drink, let cool to room temperature, then chill.
Just before serving, stir in vanilla.
Pour over ice cubes in tall glasses. Garnish with mint.

Fish Stew (Lakh-Lalo)

Dried salted fish are an important market item for communities along the Niger River in the south of Mali. This stew is eaten as a side dish with millet, cornmeal, or other staple grain for a midday or evening meal.

1 pound dried, salted small fish (substitute dried anchovies available in Oriental stores)
water to cover
3 TBS vegetable oil
3 large onions, minced fine
1 fresh red chili pepper, cored, seeded, and minced
4 tomatoes, diced
15 okra pods, trimmed, cooked until soft in salted water for 7–10 minutes, then drained

Soak fish for 30 minutes in warm water to cover; drain.
In a saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil.
Fry half the onions until golden. Set aside.
Fry chili and tomatoes for 2 minutes.
Stir in 1 cup water; add fish and simmer gently for about 15 minutes.
In a food processor or blender, puree okra and the remaining onions; stir into pan.
Simmer for about 15 minutes or until the fish is tender and the sauce thickened.
Stir in the reserved onions.
Serve with boiled potatoes or paste from cornmeal, millet, or other grain.

AFRICAN TEAS

Variously known as *jus de bissap*; *tsobo* (Nigeria); *kare-kare* (Sudan); *Guinea sorrel*, *l'oseille de Guinée* (Guinea); *karkadé*, *karkaday* (North Africa and Egypt); and *karkanji* (Chad).

This is an immensely popular drink throughout western and central Africa and Egypt. It is a tea made from the dried red flowers of *Hibiscus sabdariffa*. The dried flowers are available in most markets and the tea is sold by vendors. It is the main ingredient in herbal hibiscus tea bags. In Guinea, parts of Sudan, and Egypt, it is considered the national drink. The taste is pleasantly tart, somewhat like mild cranberry juice. The tea itself is sometimes enhanced by adding other flavorings. It can be drunk hot or cold. (It is also drunk in the Caribbean and there it is known as sorrel.)

2–3 cups dried hibiscus flowers (available from African, Caribbean, and health food stores) or hibiscus tea bags
2 quarts water
1–2 cups sugar

Optional Flavorings

Use any of the following:

sprig of mint
½ tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp grated fresh ginger root
1 tsp orange-blossom water
2–3 cinnamon sticks

Briefly rinse the dried flowers in water.
Boil water.
As soon as the water begins to boil, pour it over a kettle or teapot with the hibiscus flowers.
Let the flowers steep for 10 minutes.
Pour the water through a fine strainer.
Stir in sugar to taste.
Add any one or a combination of flavorings (if desired).
Serve hot, or allow to chill and serve over ice.

Cardamom Tea

This is popular in eastern Africa.

4 cups water
5 tsp tea leaves
1 tsp ground cardamom or 4 cardamom pods
sugar or honey to taste
1 cup milk

(*continued*)

Heat the water to a near boil.
Place leaves in a teapot and add water. Steep as normal.
Pour the tea into cups and add to each cup a pinch of ground cardamom, sugar or honey, and milk to taste.

***East African Milk Tea* (Chai)**

Chai is the word for tea throughout the Middle East, western Asia, and in Swahili-speaking eastern Africa. There are many variants of serving tea. This one is common throughout eastern Africa.

2 cups water
2 cups milk
5 tsp tea leaves
4 cardamom seeds
1 tsp dried ginger powder
sugar to taste

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil.
Simmer for a few minutes.
Pour the tea through a strainer into a teapot and serve immediately.

***Moroccan Mint Tea* (Chai bi'Naana)**

In Morocco and throughout the Moroccan diaspora, hot mint tea is served as a refreshment at any hour of the day. It is always served in glass tumblers.

a full handful fresh mint
2 TBS black or green tea leaves
5 cups boiling water
6 ounces sugar

Place mint and tea into a long-spouted teapot.
Pour in about ½ cup boiling water, rapidly swirl around to wash leaves, then discard water.
Add sugar.
Add 2 cups boiling water.
Allow to steep for 5–6 minutes.
Pour into small thick-walled glasses (shot glasses are ideal).
Add another cup boiling water and more sugar for a second serving.
Add another cup boiling water, more sugar, and more mint if necessary for a third serving.
The tea should be sweet and very minty.

Songhay Date and Meat Stew with Dumplings

Famed horsemen, the Songhay live in the southern and eastern parts of Mali. Their usual meal, often eaten twice a day, is a hard ball of pounded millet placed in a bowl, softened with water (or milk with a bit of sugar if available).

This dish is for a celebratory meal. For special occasions or when guests arrive, a goat is slaughtered and cooked in this North African–influenced stew perfumed with spices. Beef has been substituted in this recipe for goat or lamb.

2 pounds frozen bread roll dough, defrosted
3 TBS oil
2 pounds beef, cubed
6 onions, chopped
1 cup tomato paste
8 large tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped (or 2 16-ounce cans tomatoes)
10 dried dates, pitted, soaked in 1 cup warm water for 20 minutes and finely chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS anise seed
1 tsp cumin
1 stick cinnamon
2 bay leaves
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper

With floured hands, tear off bits of dough to make golf-ball-sized dumplings.
Place dumplings well apart on a greased tray and cover with a moist cloth; let rest for 1 hour.
In a thick-bottomed 5-quart saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Brown the meat, a few pieces at a time; remove and set aside.
Fry onions until softened.
Add tomato paste, tomatoes, and dates, including soaking water.
Stir in and mix well the garlic, anise, cumin, cinnamon, bay leaves, salt, and pepper.
Cook covered over medium heat for approximately 15 minutes.
Add 12 cups of water and continue to simmer for about 30 minutes.
Drop some dumplings into the simmering stew, leaving room for them to expand. Do not stir them in.
Cover and cook for approximately 30 more minutes.
Take out the cooked dumplings and keep warm.
Continue to cook the remaining dumplings.
If stew becomes too thick, add more water, tomatoes, spices, and dates.
When all the dumplings are done, adjust the seasoning as necessary.
Put three or more dumplings in a plate. Spoon sauce and meat on the side.

Sweet Millet Fritters (Maasa)

This sweet dish originates from the south of the country, where millet and cassava are both staples. These are commonly sold in the market or in the street stalls freshly made, for snacks.

6 TBS milk
6 TBS cold water
1 TBS sugar
2 tsp active dry yeast

(*continued*)

2 cups millet flour (available from health food stores)
2 cups brown rice flour (available from health food stores)
1 TBS baking powder
vegetable oil for frying
confectioners' sugar for dusting

Combine milk and water in a pan.
Gently heat to body heat; transfer into a mixing bowl and stir in sugar until dissolved.
Add yeast, keeping mixture in a warm place until yeast is frothy.
In a large bowl, blend together both flours and baking powder.
Stir in yeast mixture; cover with damp towel and leave in warm draft-free place to rise for 30–40 minutes.
Gently stir mixture to the consistency of thick pancake batter.
In a large, heavy-bottomed skillet, heat about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch of oil over low to medium heat.
Fry a few spoonfuls of the mixture at a time to golden brown.
Drain on paper towels; sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.
Serve at once.

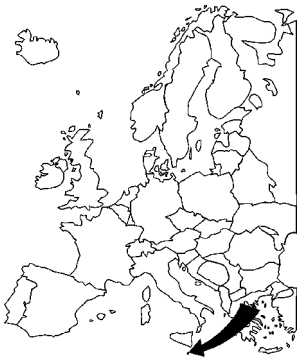
Peanut Biscuits (Kulikuli)

Peanuts are a ubiquitous food item, made into snacks and savory sauces. Like these biscuits, sugared peanuts are a common snack sold in the streets.

3½ cups smooth natural peanut butter
½ cup warm water
peanut oil for deep-frying
salt to taste

Put peanut butter in a bowl.
Knead and squeeze to extract excess oil.
Add small amounts of warm water occasionally to help extract the oil. Continue kneading and squeezing until most of the oil is extracted and the result is a smooth paste.
Add extracted oil to frying oil.
Taste the peanut paste, and add salt, if desired (most peanut butter is salted).
With floured hands, mold the paste into small, flat patties.
In a thick-bottomed skillet over low heat, heat $\frac{1}{8}$ inch of peanut oil. Fry the patties to a golden brown.
Remove from heat; drain and cool.
These can be stored for about a week in an airtight container at room temperature.

MALTA



The smallest country in the European Union, Malta is an archipelago with only three inhabited islands. Its strategic location has made it occupied by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and French. In 1800 it became an English protectorate, becoming independent in 1964, but is still part of the British Commonwealth.

The climate is Mediterranean: mild, rainy winters with hot, dry summers. The terrain consists of low hills and cliffs with thin and rocky soil; some valleys are terraced and farmed for wheat, fruits, vegetables, and livestock, but these constitute only 20 percent of the country's food. The sea is another important food source, but the rest is imported. Maltese cuisine is influenced by nearby Sicily (Italy) and North Africa.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: bread, pasta.
- Rabbit (preferred), pork, chicken, lamb, goat, horse, eggs, cheese (locally made from goat's and sheep's milk).
- Potato, tomato, zucchini, eggplant, cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkin, squash, spinach.
- Cantaloupe, watermelon, grape, peach, nectarine, apricot, pomegranate, medlar, plum, citrus (grapefruit, tangerine, and orange).
- Seasonings: marjoram, mint, parsley, basil, garlic, pepper, tomato, olive oil.

Typical Dishes

- Oven-baked dishes: rice or pasta with meat and tomato sauce.
- Rabbit dishes: rabbit stewed in wine (*fenkata*), fried rabbit.
- Pasta dishes: meat- or cheese-filled hand-made ravioli (*ravjul*).
- Pastry-enclosed dishes: cauliflower with sheep or goat cheese; fish pie (*lampuki*); pasta and meat sauce covered with pastry (*timpana*).
- Stewed dishes: stuffed octopus, squid, and cuttlefish in spicy tomato sauce; stuffed roast chicken.
- Soups: fish (*aljotta*), young broad bean (*kusksu*), baby zucchini (*qarabali*).
- Vegetable dishes: stuffed eggplants, tomatoes, peppers, and other vegetables; mixed simmered vegetables (*kapunata*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: bread, goat or sheep cheese, olives, tomatoes, cooked egg, coffee or tea.
- Lunch: crusty slices of bread rubbed with ripe tomatoes and olive oil (*hobz biz-zejt*), topped with capers, olives, tuna or anchovies or goat or sheep cheese; or baked pasta dish.
- Dinner: first course of mixed or single vegetable soup (*minestra*) with crusty bread (*hobz*); main course of rabbit stewed in wine (*fenkata*) or stuffed eggplant served with fried potatoes and vegetable salad; dessert of fresh fruit; coffee with sugared almonds.
- Snacks (to eat with coffee or tea at mid-morning or mid-afternoon): boat-shaped pastries filled with cheese or peas (*pastizzi*); date-filled pastries (*imqaret*); treacle rings (*qaghaq tal-ghasel*).
- Drinks: orange, lemon, and other fruit juices, local and imported wine, local and international beer, international bottled soft drinks.
- Many types of eating places serve international food in the cities.

Spicy Bean Mash (Bigilla)

This is a Turkish-influenced dip for the crusty rolls called *hobz* that accompany most meals. It can be served for a snack or as a first course.

1 pound dried broad or navy beans (or 1 16-ounce can)
salt to taste
2 TBS olive oil
2 sprigs parsley, finely minced
2–3 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, finely minced (optional)
1 TBS mixed fresh marjoram and mint, finely chopped
1 TBS lemon juice
Garnishes: 1 TBS olive oil, 2 TBS fresh parsley, minced

Soak beans overnight (or, if using canned beans, drain, and skip first three steps).
Put beans in a pot with water to cover.
Bring to a boil and simmer until beans are soft, for about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
In a food processor or blender, puree beans with the remaining ingredients.
Place in a serving bowl.
Make a depression in the center of the bean mash; drizzle in olive oil and sprinkle with parsley.
Serve with bread.

Fish Soup (Aljotta)

Many Maltese meals include fish in one form or another. Fish soup is a common way of preparing any medium-sized fish. This can be served with rice as a main meal for lunch or as a first course for dinner.

2 TBS olive oil
2 onions, chopped
5 garlic cloves, minced
2 TBS fresh marjoram
4 peppercorns
1 tsp tomato paste
1 pound tomatoes, peeled and chopped roughly
4 cups fish stock (or 2 stock cubes in 4 cups boiling water)
1 pound white fish fillets (any type), sliced into bite-sized pieces
salt, pepper to taste
1 TBS fresh mint, 1 TBS fresh marjoram, finely chopped, for garnish

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onions and fry until soft.
Stir in garlic, marjoram, peppercorns, and tomato paste; cook for 2 minutes.
Stir in tomatoes and fish stock; bring to a boil.
Add fish fillets, and return to a boil. Add seasoning.
Reduce heat; simmer for about 10 minutes, or until fish are done.
Ladle into soup bowls; sprinkle with herbs and serve hot.

Stuffed Eggplant (Bringiel Mimli)

The Turkish influence on Maltese cuisine is evident in this dish. Serve as a main course after fish soup or as a first course for dinner.

2 large eggplants, halved lengthwise
1 large pot of boiling water
1 TBS butter
1 onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
½ pound ground meat (beef, pork, or lamb, or a mixture)
1 tsp tomato paste
1 small tomato, chopped
1 TBS parsley, chopped
½ cup bread crumbs
1 egg, beaten
½ cup grated mild yellow cheese
salt and pepper to taste

Parboil eggplants in boiling water for 5 minutes; drain.
Scoop out flesh, leaving a ½-inch shell. Reserve flesh.
Heat butter in a saucepan, and fry onion until translucent; stir in garlic and meat.
When meat is lightly browned, stir in the eggplant flesh, tomato paste, tomato, parsley, and half the bread crumbs.
Cook until meat is done, about 15 minutes, stirring constantly.
Remove from heat.
Stir in the egg, half the cheese, and seasoning; mix well.
Stuff eggplant shells with mixture.
Sprinkle with remaining bread crumbs and cheese.
Bake in 350°F oven for 40–45 minutes or until eggplant shells are soft and the tops are nicely browned.

Meat Loaf (Pulpettun)

There are many variations of this popular dish, commonly served with rice or fried potatoes and a salad for a midday or evening meal.

1 large onion, grated
3 ounces soft bread crumbs
½ cup stock
3 TBS chopped parsley
2 eggs, beaten
2 TBS grated hard cheese such as Parmesan
1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
2 pounds ground meat (beef or mix of pork and beef)
3 hard-boiled eggs, shelled
2 TBS olive oil
2 TBS tomato puree
¾ cup hot water
1 clove garlic, crushed
½ tsp sugar
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a large bowl, combine onion, bread crumbs, half the stock, parsley, beaten eggs, cheese, salt, and pepper.
Add beef and mix thoroughly.
Lightly oil a large loaf pan.
Press half of the meat mixture in an even layer.
Lay hard-boiled eggs in a row in the middle of the meat mixture.
Cover eggs with the remaining beef mixture.
Smooth the surface of the meat; brush with olive oil.
Bake for 20 minutes.
Meanwhile, combine remaining stock, tomato puree, hot water, garlic, sugar, salt, and pepper; pour over the meat loaf.
Bake for 40 minutes more until cooked through.
Baste occasionally with the tomato stock, adding a little hot water if the sauce begins to scorch.
Leave meat loaf in pan to cool slightly, for about 10 minutes; pour off sauce into a bowl or gravy dish.
Unmold meat loaf onto a platter and slice crosswise.
Spoon sauce over meat and serve.

Easter Cookies (Figolli)

The *figolla* (singular) is the equivalent of a chocolate Easter bunny or egg. It is a cookie sandwich with an almond filling traditionally eaten during Easter. *Figolli* were traditionally made into symbolic shapes, but now they can be of any shape.

1 pound flour
½ pound sugar
1 cup butter, diced
juice and grated rind of 1 lemon
vanilla extract
2 eggs, beaten well
water
½ cup milk (for assembly)
For Decoration:
pastel colored small icing tubes (pink, yellow, green, white, etc.); candied almonds; miniature Easter eggs (candies)

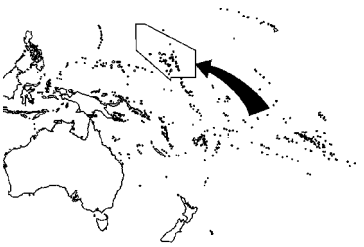
In a food processor, prepare a soft dough with all the ingredients except the milk.
Remove the dough and knead for 5 minutes on a floured surface until glossy.
Roll the dough into a ball.
Wrap in plastic film and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.
On a floured surface, roll out the pastry dough to about ⅕-inch thick.
Cut out pairs of figures with a cookie cutter (lambs, chickens, eggs, Easter symbols).
Spread some almond paste onto one figure in a pair; leave a margin of about ½ inch all around.
Brush the margin with milk; lay the second figure over, pressing gently to seal.
Brush tops with milk; place onto a lightly greased baking sheet.
Bake for 5 minutes at 400°F.
Lower heat to 325°F and bake for about 10–15 minutes more until lightly golden.
When cool, decorate with piped icing in pastel colors. It is traditional to stick a miniature (candy) Easter egg on the decorated cookie.

Filling

½ pound plain marzipan, diced
½ cup rough chopped almonds
1 tsp orange blossom water
2 TBS lemon juice
2 TBS water

In a food processor, mix marzipan, chopped almonds, orange blossom water, lemon juice, and water to make a soft paste.
Add a bit more water if necessary.

MARSHALL ISLANDS



An archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, comprising over 1,000 coral islands, the Marshall Islands were under Spanish, German, Japanese, and American control until independence in 1986. The climate is tropical but the soil is poor, largely coral sands, and yields breadfruit, pandanus, swamp taro, and coconut. The sea is the main food source.

The population is predominantly Malay-Polynesian, with many mixed Europeans (German, American) and Japanese. Traditional food was based on a few locally available ingredients. Because of fallout from nuclear testing from the 1940s to the 1970s, contamination affects food crops and marine life on some islands. So modern food is mostly canned or frozen, imported from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Taiwan.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, breadfruit, taro.
- Noodles (*ramen*).
- Tuna (yellowfin, albacore, skipjack, bigeye), marlin, mahi-mahi, grouper, many varieties of open sea and coral fish; preserved fish—canned sardines and tuna, tuna jerky; seafood (mangrove crabs, octopus, shrimps, squid, giant clams, lobster); canned meat (Spam, corned beef), chicken, pork, eggs.
- Squash, pumpkin, arrowroot, carrot, peas, cabbage, green leaves (pumpkin, sweet potato), eggplant, beans.
- Banana (unripe and ripe), pandanus fruit, papaya (unripe and ripe), coconut, mango, orange, canned fruit (peaches, pineapple, fruit cocktail), macadamia nut, peanut.

Typical Dishes

- Traditional stews in coconut milk: pumpkin (*banke kalel*), breadfruit (*ma*).
- Traditional dishes with taro: cooked with breadfruit, bananas. or nuts in grated coconut (*wuden*); flavored with coconut, wrapped in taro leaves and baked (*jebwater*); grated and mixed with coconut oil and coconut sap (*totaimon*).
- Traditional dishes with breadfruit: boiled, roasted, steamed, fried, or baked in an underground oven (*um*), made into soup. Also preserved by fermentation.

- American-influenced dishes: potato salad, coleslaw, doughnuts, pancakes, fried chicken.
- Chinese-influenced dishes: fried vegetable roll.
- Japanese-influenced dishes: rice (introduced during World War II); raw tuna (*sashimi*); instant noodles (*ramen*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- The traditional diet was a boiled or steamed staple (breadfruit, yam, or taro) served with freshly caught fish or seafood, roasted or stewed, or vegetables, usually pumpkin fruit or leaves, flavored with coconut milk. This diet is still observed in some islands far from urban and Western conveniences.
- Everyday meals are based on rice topped with a meat or fish dish (usually with no other accompaniment).
- Breakfast: urban—store-bought doughnuts/pancakes or packaged breakfast cereal, milk, coffee.
- Lunch: rice, corned beef hash.
- Dinner: rice, fried chicken or fried fish.
- Snack: traditional—mashed banana or taro and coconut balls (*jukjuk*), fresh pandanus fruit, banana; contemporary—ice cream, candy, coookies, cheeseburger, pizza, French fries, or hotdog with carbonated bottled drink.
- Drinks: coconut water, coconut toddy (fresh and fermented), bottled soft drinks.
- Celebration meals (e.g., birthday) include *sashimi* served with mayonnaise, vegetable rolls, fried chicken, lobster, shrimps, potato salad, coleslaw, fruit salad, and traditional pumpkin stewed in coconut milk.
- Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Indian/Sri Lankan, and Western fast food (burgers, pizza, pasta) are available in restaurants or cafes in the capital city.

Dried Fish

This Japanese-influenced dish is served for a midday or evening meal over rice.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 pound fish fillet, parboiled, skinned, and flaked (or substitute 2 cans tuna in brine, well drained)
1 packet *furikake* with *nori* (a Japanese seaweed-based seasoning sold in packets in Oriental food stores)

Heat oil over low heat in a wok or frying pan.
Add garlic and stir-fry until fragrant (about 1 minute).
Add fish; raise heat to medium-high. Stir constantly to dry the fish, for about 15–20 minutes.
When the fish is dry, remove from heat.
Add 2 TBS *furikake* and mix.
Serve over rice.

Crab and Potato Cakes

The original recipe calls for coconut crab and breadfruit, which would be difficult to obtain outside the country. The substitutes are regular or imitation crab and potatoes. Grated coconut is added to replicate the distinctive flavor of the coconut crab's flesh, from its diet of coconuts. Serve with coleslaw and rice for dinner.

¼ cup bacon, diced
⅔ pound imitation or real crabmeat (fresh or canned), diced
1 onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, chopped
⅔ cup boiled potatoes, diced
3 stalks green onions, chopped
2 tsp mustard
salt, pepper to taste
¼ cup mayonnaise
2¼ cups bread crumbs
¼ cup grated coconut
4 eggs, beaten
1 cup flour
oil for frying

In a skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until it starts to brown.
Drain off the fat, leaving just a film.
Stir in crab, onion, garlic, and bell pepper; fry until vegetables are softened.
Transfer mixture to a large bowl.
Let cool slightly; add potatoes, green onions, mustard, salt, and pepper.
Mix well; stir in mayonnaise, ¼ cup bread crumbs, and coconut.
Chill for 1 hour or more.
Divide mixture into eight; shape into patties.
Dip into the beaten eggs, then into flour, into the eggs again, and finally cover with the remaining bread crumbs.
Fry in medium-hot oil until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels.
Keep fried cakes hot in a medium oven (350°F).

Macadamia Nut Pie

Macadamia nuts are not native to the Marshall Islands but are popularly made into confections for special occasions, such as a birthday.

4 TBS butter, melted
⅔ cup grated coconut
frozen readymade pastry for a 10-inch single crust pie, defrosted
4 large eggs
½ cup light corn syrup
½ cup white sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
a pinch of salt
2½ cups macadamia nuts, coarsely chopped
1 cup whipping cream
5 TBS coconut milk

Mix butter and coconut well and press onto the bottom and sides of the unbaked crust.
In a large bowl, mix well the eggs, corn syrup, sugar, vanilla, and salt.
Stir in macadamia nuts; pour into pie shell.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 15 minutes.
Reduce temperature to 325°F; continue baking for about 30 minutes, or until top is golden brown and filling tests set. (Stick a toothpick or skewer in the middle; if it comes out clean, the pie is done.)
Take pie out of oven, and set aside on a rack to cool.
For coconut-milk topping: in a well-chilled bowl, whip cream to soft peaks.
Pour in coconut milk a little at a time; stop whipping when all the coconut milk has been mixed.
Slice pie into wedges. Pass coconut milk for diners to help themselves.

MAURITANIA

Mauritania is a large country in Northwest Africa, most of which is the barren Sahara desert. Historically part of a vast Arab Berber empire that stretched toward Spain and Portugal from the eleventh century, Mauritania became a French colony in 1814 and gained independence in 1960.

The terrain is mostly flat; its climate hot, dry, and dusty. The southern region, where most Mauritanians live, is watered by the Senegal River. Coastal fishing is a major resource of food (though heavily depleted by foreign fishing). Livestock (tended by the mostly nomadic population), dates, and cereal grains (sorghum, millet) are raised.

Mauritanians are divided between Arab Berbers to the north and black Africans to the south. The cuisine is influenced by neighboring North African (Algeria, Morocco) and sub-Saharan African (Senegalese) elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: couscous, rice.
- Camel, lamb, goat, beef, sea fish, chicken, eggs, dairy products (camel, goat, sheep milk, yogurt, cheese).
- Potato, carrot, parsnip, sweet pepper, beans, cowpeas, chickpeas, lettuce.
- Dates, figs, watermelon, cantaloupe.
- Seasonings: cumin, coriander, pepper, mint.

Typical Dishes

- Stewed camel meat over rice, couscous, or spaghetti.
- Breads: French-style baguette and rolls, flat bread.
- Grilled and dried fish.
- Senegalese-style dishes: rice and fish stew (*tieboudienne*, also spelled *ceebujenn*); fish balls; chicken *yassa* (stew with onions).
- Salads of seasonal vegetables, usually tomatoes and cucumbers.
- French fried potatoes served with most dishes, including sandwiches.

Styles of Eating

- One to three meals a day and snacks (food shortages are common).
- Before eating, hands are washed with water from a pitcher and soap. At home, food is eaten from a common dish set on the floor on a cloth, using the right hand only. Men and women generally eat separately.
- Breakfast: baguette or roll, coffee or tea.
- Lunch: rice and fish (*ceebujenn*), vegetable salad, fried potatoes.
- Dinner: pasta with camel meat, vegetable salad, fried potatoes, watermelon or other seasonal fruit, sweet mint tea.
- Snacks: sweet fritters, grilled skewered meat, nuts.
- Drinks: camel's milk (*zrig*), sweet mint tea, yogurt, and fruit shake (*chakri*). Alcoholic drinks are frowned upon by Muslims.
- Western-style fast foods (pizza, hamburger) and Mexican, Chinese, and Senegalese food are available in restaurants in the capital.

Stuffed Leg of Lamb (Mechoui)

Next to camel, the most common meat eaten in Mauritania is lamb. The Moroccan original *mechoui* is roast lamb flavored with paprika; this Mauritanian version includes a stuffing of assorted dried fruits. This would be served for a celebration.

1 leg of lamb, boned, about 4 pounds

Stuffing

2 ounces raisins
2 ounces pitted dates, chopped
2 ounces dried figs, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1 cup uncooked rice
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp coriander powder
⅛ tsp pepper
3 cups stock or bouillon (or 1½ bouillon cubes dissolved in 3 cups warm water)

In a saucepan, combine all the stuffing ingredients with 2 cups stock and bring to a boil.
Cover and allow to simmer for 15 minutes, or until the rice is almost done.
Remove from heat and allow to cool.
Meanwhile preheat the oven to 325°F.
Put the stuffing into the cavity in the lamb. Secure firmly with skewers or kitchen string.
(Any remaining stuffing can be placed in a greased baking pan, covered with foil, and baked at the same time in a lower shelf in the oven.)
Place the stuffed leg on a rack in a shallow roasting pan; put remaining stock into the pan.
Roast the lamb for 2½–3 hours in the center of the oven. This results in a slightly pink center. Calculate roasting time per pound of meat and

(*continued*)

stuffing at 25 minutes, plus an extra 25 minutes for medium done. (For well done, roast at 30 minutes per pound, plus an extra 30 minutes.)
Baste the lamb occasionally with the remaining stock and meat juices while roasting.
Let rest for 10 minutes before carving to let the meat settle. Serve surrounded with the rice stuffing.

Pepper Steak

This is common in the south of the country as a luxury dish.

¼ cup vegetable oil
1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced fine (or 1 tsp garlic powder)
¼ tsp chili or cayenne powder
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, cut in strips
4 beef steaks, cut in strips
1 cube beef stock, crushed
½ cup coconut milk
¼ cup water
2 TBS cornstarch, dissolved in 3 TBS water

Heat oil in a frying pan and add salt, pepper, garlic, and chili.
Sauté the green peppers for 2 minutes.
Add strips of steak and sauté for 2 minutes.
Add crushed stock cube.
Remove the meat and bell peppers from the pan and keep warm.
Mix the coconut milk and water. Add to the gravy remaining in the pan and bring to a boil.
Stir in the cornstarch slurry, and simmer over low heat until smooth and thickened.
Return the steak and peppers to the pan briefly to heat through.
Serve at once with rice.

Chicken and Chickpeas (Chaj)

Chickpeas and other legumes are commonly eaten, made into stews, for a midday or evening meal.

¼ cup butter
4 large portions chicken, legs or quarters
2 large onions, sliced into rings
1 8-ounce can chickpeas
salt and pepper to taste
½ cup water

Heat the butter in a saucepan.
Stir in chicken and onions, frying until chicken is browned and onions soft.

Add chickpeas, salt, and pepper.
Cook on high heat for 10 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add water, cover; reduce heat and simmer for 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Serve with flat bread (*pita*) and fried potatoes.

Nomad-Style Lamb

Grilled skewers of lamb are a common snack food.

2 TBS oil
2 TBS mustard
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and shredded
1 tsp salt
1 bunch thyme
1 pound lamb (or turkey, chicken, beef) cut into bite-sized cubes
1 eggplant, cut into 2-inch cubes
2 green bell peppers, cored and seeded, cut into 2-inch cubes
2 large semi-ripe tomatoes, cut into eighths
2 large onions, cut into eighths
salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Mix a marinade of oil, mustard, chili, salt, and thyme.
Marinate the meat for 1 hour or more.
Thread meat and vegetables alternately onto four skewers.
Grill over hot coals or under a broiler, until meat is done but still pink in the middle (if using turkey, it must be thoroughly cooked in the middle, but still moist).
Sprinkle with some cayenne powder and additional salt to taste.
Serve with flat bread (*pita*).

Couscous

Couscous is eaten all over North Africa. This is a festive dish, with Mauritanian characteristic fruit additions.

Stew

2–3 TBS vegetable oil
2 pounds boneless stewing lamb (chicken, beef, or turkey), cut into 1-inch cubes
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
3 turnips, peeled and chopped
3 carrots, peeled and sliced
3 small potatoes, quartered
1 cup cabbage, chopped coarsely
1 cup pumpkin, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
salt, pepper to taste

(*continued*)

In a large, deep, covered saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat, and quickly brown the meat.
Push the meat to one side, reduce heat and sauté the onions and garlic until golden.
Add vegetables, stirring for 2–3 minutes.
Add seasoning and enough water to cover vegetables, and simmer, covered, until the vegetables are tender and the meat is cooked, about 45–60 minutes.

Couscous

2 cups couscous
1 cup dates, pitted and chopped
½ cup raisins
1 cup cooked chickpeas
¼ cup butter, melted

Prepare the couscous by sprinkling with about 1 cup of cold water to moisten.
Work the water into the couscous with the fingers so that lumps do not form.
Mix in the dates, raisins, and chickpeas, place in a colander and steam for 30 minutes over the simmering stew or over boiling water in a separate pan (see Algeria for the box "Couscous").
Transfer the couscous to a large bowl. Sprinkle with 1 cup of cold water and work into the couscous as before, breaking apart any lumps.
Stir in the butter and mix into the couscous.
Return couscous to the colander and steam for another 30 minutes.
To serve: place a mound of couscous on individual plates, and surround with the stew, ensuring that everyone gets an equal share of meat and a variety of vegetables.

MAURITIUS

A small island in the Indian Ocean noted for being the home of the now extinct dodo bird, Mauritius was a Dutch, French, then British colony until independence in 1968 and still remains part of the British Commonwealth. The terrain consists of a coastal plain and central plateau, with a warm subtropical climate tempered by trade winds, ideal for a wide range of tropical crops such as sugarcane (a major export).

The multicultural Mauritians are mostly of Indian descent (whose forebears were brought in for the colonial plantations), with minorities of African, European, Chinese, and mixed Creoles. The cuisine reflects this multiethnic mix. Though many of the islanders are Hindus, meat is eaten by most.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, French baguette, Indian flat breads.
- Chicken, beef (not for Hindus), pork (not for Muslims), fish, seafood (giant prawns), wild game (boar, venison).
- Potato, maize, tomato, cucumber, pumpkin, gourds, carrot, lettuce, eggplant, cabbage.
- Banana, pineapple, coconut, mango.
- Seasonings: tomato, ginger, garlic, chilies, curry spices, Chinese cooking spices, French cooking herbs/spices, olive oil.

Typical Dishes

- Creole *rougaille* (spicy tomato sauce).
- Indian-style dishes: curries of meat, lentils; pickled vegetable relish (*achard*).
- Chinese-style dishes: roast pork, sweet-sour vegetable stir-fry, noodles, spring roll.
- English-style dishes: bacon and eggs.
- French-style dishes: bean casserole (*cassoulet*), braised meat (*daube*), cream-based desserts, confectionery.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Normal urban table settings are European standard (with knife, fork, spoon); in rural villages people eat with spoon and fork on individual plates, or with the fingers of the right hand.
- Breakfast: French pastries or baguette with butter, jam, coffee, or tropical fruits.
- Lunch: Indian-style curry with rice, French-style custard for dessert.
- Dinner: Chinese-style red braised pork with rice.
- Snacks/mid-afternoon tea (holdover from British rule): lentil-stuffed pastry (*dholl* with *puri*) eaten with Creole tomato sauce; vegetable-filled pastries (*samossa*); fruits; sweet French pastries; peanuts.
- Drinks: tamarind, mango and other fruit juices, yogurt-based drinks, *alooda* (milk drink), coffee, tea.
- Fast food (fried chicken, pizza, burger) outlets can be found in the capital.

Choko Salad (Salade Chou Chou)

Choko, *chou chou*, or chayote is a member of the gourd family and can be eaten fresh or cooked. Serve this as side dish with any main dish for the midday or evening meal.

3 *chokos* (chayote, available from Asian and Hispanic groceries)
¼ tsp salt
water, as needed
1 TBS white vinegar
3 TBS extra virgin olive oil
1 TBS garlic, freshly crushed
1 medium onion, sliced finely
1 green chili, cored, seeded, and shredded (optional)
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Place the *chokos* into salted boiling water.
Boil for about 5–7 minutes, until just crisp-tender.
Remove and immediately place into cold water to cool.
Peel and halve the *chokos*.
Slice lengthwise.
The soft seeds may be included, if desired, or separated and eaten on their own, lightly salted.
Mix a dressing with vinegar, oil, garlic, onion, chili, salt, and pepper.
Pour the dressing over the *choko* slices.
Mix together just before serving.

Chili Cakes (Gateaux Piments)

These Indian-style fritters are common snacks, eaten with hot bread and butter or on their own.

1 cup split peas
1–2 green or red chilies, cored, seeded, and shredded
2 TBS cilantro, chopped
2 TBS spring onions, chopped finely
salt to taste
½ tsp whole cumin seeds, lightly crushed
oil for deep-frying

Rinse peas, soak in water to cover overnight, and drain.
Take half the peas and grind very fine in a blender.
Grind the second batch roughly.
Mix thoroughly remaining ingredients with the ground peas.
Add a little bit of water, if needed, for a stiff mixture.
Shape mixture into large marbles.
Heat oil and deep-fry a few at a time until golden.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot with fresh bread or on their own as a snack.

Chicken Stew (Daube de Poulet)

This stew is a blend of Indian and French influences. Serve with *faratas* (flaky flat bread) or rice, with a side dish of lentils for midday or evening.

3 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
1 TBS garlic, minced
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
2 pounds chicken, cut into serving-size pieces
3 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 TBS thyme
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 16-ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 TBS cilantro, minced fine
1 TBS cilantro, chopped, for garnish

Heat oil in a deep, thick-bottomed saucepan over medium heat.
Stir in onions, garlic, and ginger; fry until the onions are soft.
Add chicken, cloves, cinnamon, thyme, salt, and pepper; cook for 5–8 minutes, stirring well.
Stir in tomatoes and cilantro; reduce heat and let simmer for 1 hour or until chicken is tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot, garnished with cilantro.

Pancakes (Faratas)

These flaky flat breads are widely made and eaten with grilled meats. The flakiness is achieved by brushing melted butter several times into the folded dough, similar to making flaky pastry.

2 cups sifted white flour
1 tsp salt
½ cup + 2 TBS water
3 TBS (or more) ghee or melted butter

In a bowl, mix flour with salt and half the water into a dough.
Knead well for 20 minutes, adding the remaining water a little at a time to get a smooth, elastic dough.
Sprinkle with 1–2 tablespoons water; cover with a moist towel. Set aside for 20–30 minutes.
Divide dough evenly into six balls.
On a lightly floured surface, roll out each ball into a 6-inch disk.
Lightly brush a little ghee or melted butter on each disk; fold over into a semicircle.
Brush more ghee over the top; fold again.
Lightly and gently roll out again to make a disk but do not roll out to the edges to keep the air in, and not as thin as previously. Brush with more ghee.
Heat an iron griddle slowly until very hot.
Place *farata* on hot griddle to cook for 2–3 seconds.
Turn over and brush the cooked side with melted butter.
Cook for a further 2–3 seconds or until *farata* is light golden on both sides.
Keep warm while making the remainder.
Serve hot with grilled meats.

Cold Jelly Drink (Alooda Glacée)

Cold drinks are very welcome in a hot and humid climate. This is a popular drink. An alternative to the agar agar strips is firmly set gelatin of any fruit flavor, diced. Canned sweet basil drinks can be found in Asian food stores. These can be substituted for the syrup and seeds called for in the recipe.

2 TBS sweet basil seeds (available at Thai food stores; optional)
1 cup agar agar strips chopped into ½-inch pieces (agar agar or seaweed gelatin strips are available from Asian shops)
3 cups water
4 TBS sugar
1 quart very cold milk
1 tsp vanilla or almond extract
food color, red or green (optional)
4 tall drinking glasses, chilled in the refrigerator about 20 minutes before serving
2 cups crushed ice

Soak basil seeds and chopped agar-agar strips in water to cover overnight.
Make a light syrup by combining water and sugar over low heat until sugar is dissolved; cool.
Mix thoroughly syrup, milk, vanilla or almond extract, and a drop of chosen food color (for a very pale tint); chill thoroughly for at least 30 minutes.

Into each chilled glass, place 3–4 tablespoons of basil seeds and softened agar agar strips.
Pour over chilled milk mixture.
Top with crushed ice and serve.

Raspberry Cakes (Napolitaines)

These French-influenced tiny cakes filled with raspberry jam and covered in pink icing are popular and served with coffee or tea.

⅔ cup butter
1 cup sifted white flour
¼ cup good quality raspberry jam
½ cup confectioners' sugar
2 drops red food color

Rub butter into flour to make a soft dough. (Add a little more butter if needed to achieve this.)
On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to about ¼-inch thick.
Cut out 2-inch diameter rounds.
Reroll trimmings and repeat.
Place dough rounds on a lightly greased baking sheet.
Bake in a preheated oven at 325°F until done, but not brown, for about 10–15 minutes.
When cool, spread jam over half of the biscuit rounds; cover with remaining half.
Mix confectioners' sugar, food color, and about 3 tablespoons warm water to make a glaze of flowing consistency. (Add a bit more water if needed.)
Set sandwiched cakes on a grid placed over waxed paper to catch drips.
Spoon glaze over cakes to coat evenly.
Set aside to cool.

MEXICO

Directly south of the United States, Mexico covers a wide area, almost three times that of Texas. With cold mountain ranges and high plateaus, but warm coastal lowlands, Mexico has a varied climate suited to both temperate and tropical crops: coffee, sugar, corn, citrus fruits.

For 300 years a Spanish colony, Mexico became independent in 1810. The Spanish legacy is still evident in the predominantly mixed (*mestizo*) Spanish-Amerindian population, Catholicism, language, culture, and food.

Mexican cooking displays a rich mix of native Amerindian (Maya), Spanish, and French elements (from a brief period of French rule in the 1860s).

Foodstuffs

- Staples: corn, beans, wheat, rice.
- Wheat tortilla in the north; corn tortilla elsewhere.
- Pork, beef, chicken, turkey, beef, fish and shellfish, red snapper, turtle, game, edible insects.
- Vegetables and fruits: chili peppers, tomato, cactus "leaves" (*nopal*), *jicama* (a sweet, crisp tuber eaten raw), avocado, sweet pepper, pumpkin, squash, chayote, melon, grapes, citrus fruits, nuts.
- Seasonings: combined use of many types of fresh and dried chilies (not all hot) in the same dish, for example, *ancho* (large, wide, brown); *tepin* (small cranberry-like, hot); *serrano* (small, green, hot); spice and herb mixes (cilantro, *epazote* [goosefoot], and *hierba santa* [root-beer flavored leaf]); *achiote* paste (herb/spice mix colored with red seeds of *achiote* plant, *Bixa orellana*); dark chocolate in savory stews; cinnamon; cumin; oregano; cloves; vanilla.

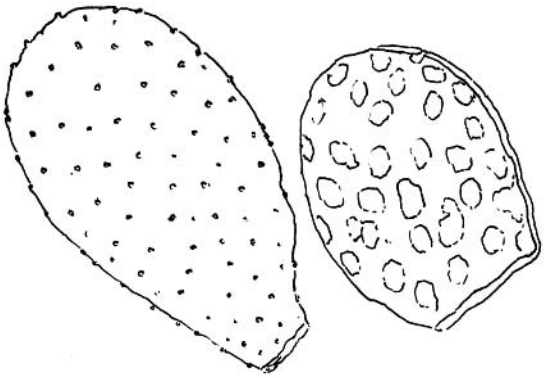
Typical Dishes

- Spanish-style stews of meat, vegetables, and fruit (*mancha manteles*, *caldillo*).
- *Mole*, the national dish: rich, spicy, herby stew with nuts or pumpkin/sesame seeds (many regional variants). *Mole* sauce can be green, red, black (with chocolate), or yellow.
- Spit-roasted meat (*barbacoa*—the original barbecue, *asado*): goat, lamb, venison, suckling pig.
- Steamed leaf-wrapped dumplings (*tamales*) of corn, meat and vegetables.

- Stuffed fried chili peppers with nuts (*chiles en nogada*).
- Sweets: Spanish-style egg-rich custards and flans; cakes of fruits, nuts, coconut; fruit pastes (quince, guava).
- Drinks: *aguas frescas* (fruit juices, often with flowers and edible seeds, such as *chia*—the gelatinous seed of a sage relative), chocolate, coffee, locally brewed beer, tequila (distilled spirit from maguey cactus).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: between 8 and 9 a.m., hot chocolate or coffee with refried beans, porridge. Tortilla or crusty roll, eggs (omelet, fried or scrambled). Around 11 a.m., for upper class; brunch-like meal.
- Lunch (*comida*): between 2 and 4 p.m. Many offices close for lunch. This is the heaviest meal, with as many as five to seven courses, featuring soup, main course, salad, and sweet. Rice, pasta dishes are considered a "dry soup" course and are served separately. Families eat together.
- A late afternoon snack or early evening meal, *merienda*, eaten between 6 and 7 p.m., consists of a savory dish or hot sandwich or sweet breads with coffee.
- Supper is eaten between 8 and 10 p.m., usually a light entrée or dessert with coffee or tea.



CACTUS LEAF

- Snacks: tortillas stuffed with cheese, bean, or meat fillings (*tacos*, *quesadillas*, *burritos*, *carnitas*); hot sandwiches (*pambazos*); *nanches* (yellow, tart, plum-sized fruit) eaten with chili sauce, salt, and lime; steamed green chickpeas in the pod; shaved ice and fruit syrup (*raspado*); crisp pork skin (*chicharron*); ripe plantains with condensed milk. Recently sweet cakes, biscuits, and candy are increasingly eaten by young children.
- *Comida corrida* (lunch on the run) is a multicourse meal complete with fresh fruit drink served at all eating places during lunch for office workers. Street stalls and vendors sell various snacks in see-through plastic cups.

Hot Sandwiches (Pambazos)

Pambazos—bread rolls filled with chicken or cheese and served with a hot sauce—are a common street food in Puebla and Veracruz, in central-eastern Mexico. This can be served as a snack or, with a salad or soup, as a light meal.

4 bread rolls
3 cups cooked chicken meat, shredded
1 onion (slice ½ onion thinly into rings and reserve the other half for sauce)
1 avocado, sliced lengthwise

(*continued*)

Split the rolls and distribute the chicken evenly among them.
Spoon the hot sauce over the chicken.
Garnish with avocado and onion slices.

Sauce

2 TBS oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ onion, minced
2 large ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
1 *guajillo* chili pepper, seeded (optional, available from Hispanic groceries, or substitute red chili pepper)
¼ tsp cumin
a pinch of cloves
a pinch of allspice
⅛ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp oregano
salt to taste
¼ cup water

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat, add the garlic and onion, and cook until soft.
Stir in the tomatoes, chili pepper, spices and herbs, and water; cover and simmer until thick for 10–15 minutes. Add salt to taste.
Pass through a sieve before using.

Avocado, Orange, and Radish Salad (Ensalada de Aguacate con Naranja y Rábanos)

Avocados and oranges are often used in both sweet and savory dishes. The radishes add a brilliant contrasting color.

1 large or 3 small avocados, cubed (sprinkle with lime juice to prevent browning)
2 oranges, peeled, segmented, and white membranes removed
5–6 radishes, sliced into circles
½ medium red onion, sliced thinly
juice of two limes (use some for avocados)
juice of one orange
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
salt and pepper to taste

Place the prepared vegetable in a bowl.
Mix the citrus juices, olive oil, cilantro, salt, and pepper.
Pour over the vegetables.
Chill for 30 minutes and serve.

Oaxacan-Style Lentils (Lentejas Oaxaqueñas)

In Oaxaca, southern Mexico, this dish is traditional during Lent as it contains no meat. The deft use of fruit is typical of cooking in this part of Mexico.

2 cups lentils
5 cups water
1 head garlic (about 10 cloves), minced
1 large onion, chopped
2 TBS oil
2 unripe plantains, cubed
1 small fresh pineapple, peeled, cubed
2 tomatoes, chopped
½ tsp cloves
1 tsp allspice
salt to taste

Bring the lentils, water, half the garlic, and half the onion to a boil.
Cover and simmer for 20–30 minutes, until lentils are tender but still firm.
Add salt to taste. Set aside.
Heat oil over medium heat in a saucepan and sauté the remaining onion and garlic until soft.
Stir in plantains, pineapple, and tomatoes, and cook until the plantains are soft, for about 10–15 minutes.
Stir in the spices, lentils, and about half of the liquid in which the lentils were cooked.
Continue cooking until thick, adding more liquid as necessary.
Serve with fried slices of plantain if desired.

Beef Roullades with Green Mole
(Bistec Relleno con Mole Verde)

The idea of this dish is to use the bacon and vegetables as a colorful stuffing for the beef rolls. Serve this as a main course for lunch, with plenty of soft tortillas to mop up the flavorful sauce, and a salad (see box "Mole Sauces").

Beef Roullades

1½ pounds thinly sliced beef
¼ pound raw smoked bacon or ham, or a mix of both, sliced into thin strips
1 potato, cut into thin strips
¼ pound string beans, cut lengthwise into thin strips
salt and pepper

Spread each piece of beef and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Lay strips of bacon, ham, potatoes, and green beans in a line along the edge of the meat closest to you.
Taking hold of the edge of the meat, fold it over the stuffing to enclose it, continuing to roll tightly until all the stuffing is covered. Secure ends of the meat with toothpicks. Set aside.

Mole

¼ cup roasted green pumpkin seeds
⅓ cup roasted sesame seeds
1 serrano chili (optional)
4–5 tomatillos (substitute green tomatoes)

(*continued*)

5 sprigs cilantro
3 sprigs epazote (substitute oregano or thyme)
3 green onions, chopped
¼ onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
½ tsp powdered cumin
3 cups chicken stock
1–2 TBS olive oil
salt to taste

In a food processor, blend the seeds, chili, tomatillos, spices, and herbs with ½ cup chicken stock until smooth. Set aside.
In a saucepan, heat olive oil and add the blended ingredients. Add salt to taste.
Stir in the rest of the chicken stock.
Put the beef rolls into the sauce and cover, simmering for 30–45 minutes or until the vegetables in the stuffing are tender.

Banana and Nut Dessert (Torta de Plátanos y Nueces)

This rich dessert showcases fruits and nuts in season. Mangoes, plums, or apples can be used instead of the bananas. Serve with cream, whipped or poured, if desired.

½ cup sugar
½ cup water
juice of 1 lime or lemon
⅓ cup butter
2 eggs, beaten
6 bananas, sliced, divided into three portions
2 cups chopped walnuts, almonds, or pecans, divided into three portions

In a small saucepan, make a light syrup by boiling sugar, water, and lime or lemon juice until the sugar dissolves. Set aside.
In a bowl, cream the butter until light.
Beat in eggs one at a time, incorporating well after each.
Pour in the still-warm syrup slowly over the butter mixture, mixing well.
In a buttered 8-inch square baking dish, place a layer of bananas.
Sprinkle with one portion of the nuts and pour a third of the butter syrup over.
Continue with the remaining bananas, nuts, and syrup.
Bake at 350°F for 15–20 minutes or until done.

MOLE SAUCES

Among the sauces originating in Mexico, the most commonly known is *mole poblano* (mole from Puebla), which features bitter chocolate and smoked chili peppers. Many pre-Columbian Mexican dishes were, apparently, prepared with mole sauces. The current form of *mole poblano* was refined by nuns in the seventeenth century, though its origins are much earlier. A popular dish, *mole poblano de guajolote* (turkey in mole), originates in a Mayan codex, according to one source.

MICRONESIA, FEDERATED STATES OF

Sometimes simply called Micronesia or FSM, this country comprises four Pacific island groups: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. (The shorter name Micronesia is confusing as it also refers to a wider geographical region that includes four other independent countries and 3 U.S. territories; see "Pacific Islands: Micronesia" entry.) With a tropical climate year round but variable terrain (some islands are volcanic, others are coral atolls with thin soil cover), only a few food crops can grow: breadfruit, taro, coconut. The sea and recent food imports are major food sources.

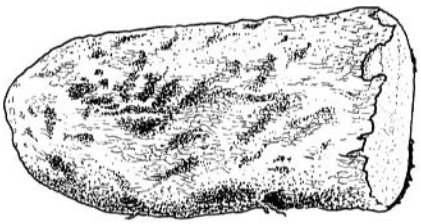
Traditional cuisine was based on local ingredients. Modern cuisine is influenced by food from the United States, Japan, other Asian countries (China, Thailand, Korea), and nearby islands, especially Guam and Hawaii.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: breadfruit, taro, sweet potato, cassava, yam (*Dioscorea sp.*). Pounded breadfruit (*kon*), preserved breadfruit, pounded taro, sweet taro, banana, and tapioca. Contemporary: rice, bread, potatoes.
- Fish (tuna, grouper, snapper—reef and open sea fish), shellfish (clam, octopus, crayfish, shrimp), dried salted fish, sea cucumber.
- Meat: pork, beef, goat, chicken, duck, eggs. Contemporary: canned meat (corned beef, Spam), canned fish (tuna, mackerel, sardines), frozen turkey, lamb, other meats, tuna jerky; macadamia nuts.
- Plantain, green vegetables (leaves of taro, sweet potato, pumpkin), pumpkin, tomato, eggplant. Contemporary: lettuce, potato.
- Coconut, mango, papaya, banana, citrus, cacao (source of chocolate), guava, local nuts. Contemporary: canned fruits (peach, cocktail), orange.
- Seasonings: black pepper (locally grown), onion, garlic, ginger, lime/lemon, coconut milk.

Typical Dishes

- Fried fresh-water eel (in Kosrae).
- Fermented breadfruit (*furoh*).
- Mashed boiled taro topped with syrup or coconut milk (*fafa*).
- Fried bananas (*tempura* style) with coconut.



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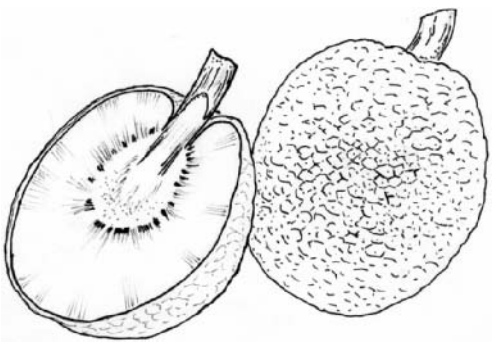


BREADFRUIT

- Grated tapioca and mashed ripe banana baked overnight (*pihlohlo*).
- Vegetables stewed with coconut milk.
- Starchy staples (taro, banana, breadfruit, yams) cooked with sweetened coconut milk (*ainpat*).
- Baked vegetables with coconut milk wrapped in taro leaves.
- Baked pork (in underground oven).
- Corned beef and Spam dishes with or without vegetables.
- American-style fast food (burger, pizza, spaghetti, macaroni).
- Japanese-style dishes: raw tuna (*sashimi*), *sushi*.
- Canned tuna or mackerel with or without vegetables.
- Chinese-style dishes: spring roll, fried noodles with vegetables.
- American-style baked goods (cakes, cookies, doughnuts).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Rural families eat more traditional type menu of local staple and locally caught fish or raised chicken/meat. Urban families eat more canned and Western-type processed food.
- Breakfast: bread, cereal, rice, egg, canned meat, juice.
- Lunch: U.S.-style fast food (sandwich, pizza, pasta); rice, canned or fresh fried or grilled fish.
- Dinner: rice, corned beef with cabbage, fresh fruit.
- Snacks: U.S.-style snacks of cookies, candy; traditional fritters.

Barbecued Chicken

Chickens are commonly raised in backyards in rural areas. There are many variations of this dish, typically eaten with rice or other boiled staple (breadfruit, taro, or sweet potato). A potato or macaroni salad may accompany it for guests.

4 chicken quarters or other large portions (bones and skin intact)
juice of 3 lemons
1 cup coconut milk
½ cup soy sauce
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced

Marinate chicken in lemon juice for 15 minutes.
Combine coconut milk, soy sauce, onion, and garlic; stir into marinating chicken.
Cover and refrigerate for 5 hours or overnight.
Grill chicken over hot charcoal or under electric grill for about 40 minutes, turning frequently to avoid burning.

Brush chicken several times with the marinade during cooking.
Serve at once.

Sweet Potato Tops Salad

This is a dish from Pohnpei. Serve this as a side dish to go with rice and chicken, meat, or fish for a midday or evening meal.

2 pounds sweet potato tops (young leaves), trimmed and washed (or substitute young spinach or watercress)
juice of 1 lemon
1 tsp salt
¼ cup mayonnaise

Blanch greens for 1–2 minutes in plenty of boiling water.
Drop into cold water to arrest cooking; drain well.
Mix lemon juice, salt, and mayonnaise.
Stir into greens; chill for 20–30 minutes.

Vegetable Curry with Mackerel

This is a dish from Chuuk. Serve as a main dish with rice for a midday meal, or as a side dish to go with a meat or chicken main dish for dinner.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 TBS curry powder
2 cups water
1 can mackerel (in oil or brine)
3 cups eggplant, cubed
1 red chili pepper, cored, seeded, and minced (optional)
3 cups frozen sliced green beans, defrosted

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onion and fry until soft.
Stir in curry powder.
Add water and mackerel; bring to a boil.
Stir in eggplant and chili pepper.
Cook for 5 minutes; add green beans.
Cook for 3 minutes more, or until beans are done but still green.

Tropical Fruit Salad

This salad from Yap is served for dessert or as a snack. Feel free to use just a few from the list or substitute any fruit in season.

2 ripe mangoes, diced
1 small ripe papaya, diced
1 small ripe pineapple, diced
juice of 1 lime or lemon
2 ripe bananas, diced
2 passion fruits, seeds and juice
1 orange, segmented
1 cup fresh or frozen grated coconut
2 cups watermelon or cantaloupe, cut into 1-inch cubes

Mix all fruits in a bowl.
Chill well for about 30 minutes or longer.

Mango and Passion Fruit Milk Shake

This is a cool drink from Yap served as a snack.

3 cups ripe mango puree
15 passion fruits, seeds and juice (or substitute 1 cup passion fruit juice)
4 cups water
2 cups milk
1 tsp vanilla

Blend all the ingredients. Chill for 30 minutes or more.

MOLDOVA

Moldova is a small landlocked country in Eastern Europe that was once part of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire and Romania, and annexed by the Soviet Union in 1945 until independence in 1991. Its fertile soil between two rivers and temperate climate of warm summers and mild winters make it a supplier of fruits, vegetables, and meat to its neighbors.

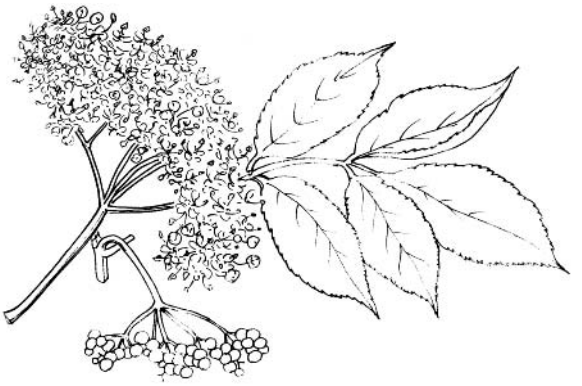
Moldovans are the majority, with minority groups of Ukrainians, Russians, Romanians, and Bulgarians. Moldovan cuisine reflects the meld of these groups as well as Greek, Jewish, Turkish, and German elements, and is noted for its preference for sour cream and sour soups.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: cornmeal (*mamaliga*) cooked in various consistencies—from porridge to a stiffer mixture—cut into wedges and eaten like bread.
- Pork, mutton, beef, poultry, sheep's cheese, smoked preserved meat or goose (*pastrama*).
- Eggplant, zucchini, sweet pepper, tomato, green beans, cabbage.
- Apple, quince, plum, grape, apricot, cherry, walnuts.
- Wine is very important, sometimes as substitute for drinking water.

Typical Dishes

- Sour soups (*ciorba*) are considered the national favorite.
- Greek-influenced sweet and savory pastries with a variety of fillings (*placinte*, *vertuta*).
- Turkish-influenced preference for mutton.
- Grilled meat dishes: fennel-flavored grilled beef rolls (*mititei*); meat patties (*parjoale*).
- Hard, white cheese made from ewe's milk (*brinza*).
- Meat stews: *tocana* (pork stew) served with fruit relishes.
- Chicken dishes: jellied chicken.
- Vegetable dishes: Turkish-influenced stuffed cabbage (*sarmale*); stewed mixed vegetables with meat (*ghiveci*); assorted pickles.
- Soups: *cutia* (a wheat soup with honey).



ELDERFLOWER

- Turkish-influenced rich sweets of honey, nuts: halvah (*alvitsa*), nougat.
- Preserved fruits in syrup: quince, apricot, plum, cherries, green walnuts.

Styles of Eating

- *Brinza* cheese and *mamaliga* (flat cake from cornmeal) are common centerpieces on a table.
- Meat is often served with fruit relishes.
- Breakfast: bread or cornmeal mush (*mamaliga*), sheep's cheese, egg, coffee.
- Lunch: chicken sour soup, cheese, milk, cream, corn mush.
- Dinner: chicken in jelly, baked fish, *mamaliga*, wine.
- Drinks: elderflower cordial (*socata*), wine (over 100 local varieties), fruit brandies, fruit juices, bottled carbonated drinks.
- There are plenty of small restaurants and coffee shops, as well as international fast food outlets in towns and in the capital.

Jellied Chicken

This dish is considered a delicacy, and is often served at home or during celebrations, as a first course or as a cold main dish after soup.

1 chicken cut into serving pieces
water to cover
1 onion, quartered
1 carrot, cut into chunks
2 bay leaves
5 cloves of garlic (3 left whole, 2 finely minced)
5 black peppercorns
⅔ tsp salt
1 packet unflavored gelatin

Put chicken to simmer in a pot with just enough water to cover.
Skim foam as the water boils.
Add vegetables, bay leaves, whole garlic cloves, peppercorns, and salt.
Gently simmer for 1 hour until chicken is tender but not falling apart.
Take out chicken; set aside to allow to cool.
Discard vegetables and strain broth through a fine sieve or cheesecloth.
Dissolve gelatin in 1 cup warm broth; stir into remaining broth.
Debone chicken and discard skin, keeping the flesh in large chunks.
Arrange chicken pieces in a glass casserole dish.
Stir in minced garlic to the broth, and heighten seasoning to compensate for a slight loss of flavor when chilled.
Pour broth over chicken.
Cover with plastic film and refrigerate overnight to gel.

Moldavian Burgers
(Parjoale Moldovenesti)

These, like *mititei*, are commonly eaten for dinner. Popular accompaniments are mashed potatoes, a fried pepper salad, and pickled cucumbers or peppers.

1 TBS lard
3 onions, finely chopped
1 pound ground meat (mixed beef and pork)
1 egg, beaten
2 slices white bread, torn and soaked in ¼ cup milk for 20 minutes
3 TBS each parsley and dill, chopped
salt, pepper
½ cup bread crumbs
lard or oil for frying

In a skillet, melt lard over medium heat; fry ⅔ of the chopped onions until softened.
Remove from heat and stir into ground meat with egg, bread, herbs, salt, pepper, and the remaining raw onion. Mix thoroughly.
With moistened hands, shape into burger-sized patties.
Coat patties with bread crumbs; chill for 20–30 minutes.
Fry in shallow fat until golden brown on both sides.
Serve hot.

Fried Pepper Salad
(Salata de Ardei Prajiti)

This is a favorite salad to accompany meat or chicken dishes.

3 TBS oil
6 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut in long, narrow (⅛-inch) strips
3 onions, chopped
1 large tomato, chopped
¼ cup tomato paste
salt, pepper to taste

Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat; sauté peppers until soft. Set aside.
Fry onions until softened in the remaining oil, adding more oil if needed.
Stir in chopped tomato, tomato paste, salt, and pepper; simmer until thick, for about 15 minutes.
Mix peppers with onion and tomato mixture.
Serve cold.

New Potatoes (Cartofi Noi)

Serve this as a side dish with meat or vegetable dishes for lunch or dinner.

1 onion, finely chopped
2 TBS oil
½ tsp flour
1 pound tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and diced
1 TBS tomato paste
salt to taste
1¾ pounds golf-ball-sized new potatoes, peeled, left whole
1 tsp fresh parsley, chopped
1 tsp fresh dill, chopped

Fry chopped onion until softened in oil over medium heat.
Sprinkle with flour and blend thoroughly.
Add tomatoes, tomato paste, and salt; stir well.
Add potatoes, parsley, and dill; simmer, covered, over low heat until tender, about 20–25 minutes.
Serve hot.

Cheese Crepes (Placinte Poale'n Brau, Placinte cu Poale in Briu)

These are popularly eaten as dessert and also as snacks to go with coffee or tea. For good results, all ingredients for the dough must be at room temperature.

1 ounce yeast
1 TBS sugar
1 cup milk
2 pounds flour
3 eggs, beaten
2 TBS oil
1 TBS melted butter
½ tsp salt
confectioners' sugar

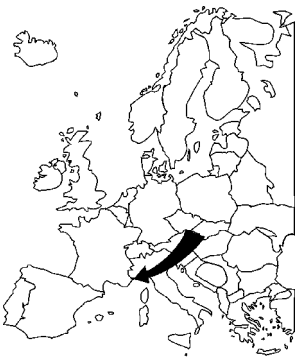
Mix yeast with sugar, 2 tablespoons warm milk, and 2 tablespoons flour in a large bowl.
Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place for about 10 minutes.
Add eggs, remaining milk, oil, butter, and salt to the risen starter.
Blend in flour to make a soft dough.
Cover and let rise until doubled in size in a warm place.
When the dough has risen, roll out to ¼-inch thick.
Cut out pastry squares measuring 8–10 inches.
Place spoonfuls of filling in the center.
Fold over the pastry corners over the filling, envelope style.
Press edges firmly to seal in filling.
Place on a lightly greased and floured baking sheet, 1–2 inches apart.
Let rise for 15–20 minutes; brush with egg wash and bake at 350°F for 25–35 minutes or until lightly golden.
Sprinkle generously with confectioners' sugar.
Serve warm.

Filling

1½ cups cottage cheese
1½ cups sour cream
3 eggs
2 TBS sugar
a pinch of salt

In a food processor, mix all ingredients until smooth.

MONACO



A Mediterranean constitutional monarchy and city-state, Monaco is roughly the size of New York's Central Park and is the world's second smallest independent country. Monaco has been under Saracen (Arab), Spanish, and Italian rule over the centuries, and since 1951 has had a special alliance with France.

Native Monegasques are a minority in their own country, together with Italians and other nationalities; the French make up half of Monaco's population. Monaco's cuisine reflects its history and its place in the Mediterranean: it has a lot in common with robust Italian and neighboring Nicoise cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat, potato.
- Lamb (preferred), fish (bass, sole, snapper), seafood (scallop, shrimp, crayfish, mussel), beef, chicken, dairy products (sheep's and goat's cheese), dried salted codfish.
- Chard, tomatoes, eggplant, bell peppers, lettuce, carrots, potatoes, mushrooms, cabbage, zucchini, artichokes, asparagus, preserved olives.
- Apricot, cherry, grape, melon, berries, fig, date, lemon, orange, pear, and apple.
- Seasonings: garlic, onion, fennel, olive oil, anchovy paste, herbs (thyme, sage, basil, marjoram, rosemary), saffron.
- Table sauces: chili and garlic mayonnaise (*rouille*); *aioli* (garlic mayonnaise).

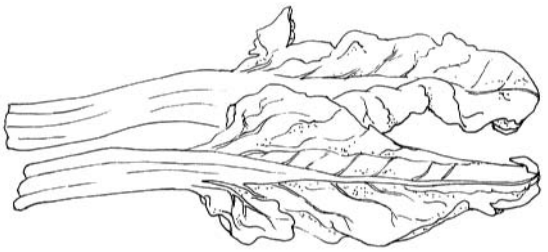
Typical Dishes

- Breads: *fougasse* (herb-flavored roll), baguette, crusty rolls.
- Potatoes, fried or boiled, are served with most dishes.
- Vegetable dishes: Swiss chard (*blette*) features often in vegetable pies (*tourta de blea*); stuffings for pasta (*cannelloni de blette*); and fried ravioli (*barbagiuan*).
- Chickpea flour pancakes and patties (*socca*).
- Dried salted cod dishes: *estocaficada* (also called *stocafi*); codfish in tomato sauce.
- Sweet pastries flavored with orange blossom water, nuts, and honey.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- European table settings.

- Breakfast: bread, jam, butter, milky coffee, juice.
- Lunch is the main meal, usually two or three courses—first course of soup or vegetable appetizer eaten with bread and butter; second course of fish or lamb or poultry accompanied by potatoes or rice, a vegetable side dish; pastry or other sweet.
- The evening meal is usually light: bread with eggs, cheese, or preserved meats, salad.
- There are many restaurants, bars, and cafes providing all types of international and local food.



SWISS CHARD

Fried Dumplings (Barbaguian, Barba-juan)

The name of these fried stuffed dumplings means "Uncle Jean" in Monegasque. They are usually made in the mountains beyond Monaco and Nice and are also called *borsoutou*, depending on the type of filling. This recipe is for the Monegasque version using Swiss chard (*blette*), a very popular green vegetable. Other fillings, such as pumpkin, are also used. For convenience, use round wonton wrappers or fresh lasagna sheets. These can be served as a first course or a main course for a light meal.

Wrappers

2 cups flour
½ tsp salt
¾ to 1 cup water
½ cup olive oil
1 egg

In a food processor, combine all the wrapper ingredients to make a dough.
On a floured surface, knead well for 20–30 minutes.
Let rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour covered with a moist towel.
Roll out to ⅛-inch thick and cut out 3-inch diameter circles.
Cover wrappers with moist towel until ready to use.
Put a spoonful of filling in the center, cover with another wrapper.
Moisten edges with water and seal firmly.
Deep-fry dumplings in medium-hot oil until golden brown on each side.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Filling

2 TBS olive oil
2 cups finely chopped leek, white part only
4 salted anchovies in oil, finely chopped
3 cups squeezed, parboiled Swiss chard or spinach, chopped fine
¼ cup cooked rice
½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
2 eggs, beaten
pepper, salt

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a big frying pan; fry leeks, covered, over low heat, until very soft, for about 10 minutes.
Add anchovies, crushing them into the oil and leeks.
Stir in chard or spinach, raise heat to medium, and fry for another 3–5 minutes.
Off the heat add rice, cheese, eggs, and pepper.
The anchovies and cheese are quite salty, so taste first to see if salt is needed.

Stuffed Vegetables with Tuna and Sardines (Petits Farcis Thon et Sardines)

This vegetable dish can be a first course for a meal or a light dish for lunch.

2 quarts water
1 TBS salt
12 small red (sweet) onions
3 zucchini, each about 8 inches long, cut into 2-inch sections
12 plum tomatoes, roughly same size as onions
2 TBS olive oil
1 small can tuna, drained
3 TBS lemon juice
2 cans sardines, drained
⅓ cup sour cream
1 small jar pickled red bell peppers, drained, finely chopped
2 cups rocket (arugula), washed and drained

Boil water and salt.
Parboil onions and zucchini for 5 minutes. Drain and set aside to cool.
Cut a thin slice off the tops of the tomatoes; hollow out and reserve pulp.
Take out inner rings from onions; reserve.
Take out center flesh from zucchini sections, leaving one end intact and a ¼-inch wall; reserve flesh.
Stuff vegetables with the fillings.
Place on baking dish; drizzle with remaining olive oil and put under hot grill for 5–8 minutes, or until heated through.
Arrange vegetables on a bed of rocket on individual plates.
Serve at once.

Tuna filling: finely chop the reserved pulp and flesh of the tomatoes, onions, and zucchini. Mix thoroughly with flaked tuna, half of the olive oil, and lemon juice.
Sardine filling: mash sardines, mix with sour cream and bell peppers.

Chickpea Cakes (Socca)

Socca are savory cakes sold all around the markets of Monaco and neighboring Nice, freshly made and eaten piping hot as afternoon snacks.

2 cups water
2 tsp salt
2¼ cups chickpea flour (available from Middle Eastern and Indian stores)
¼ cup + 2 TBS olive oil

Preheat oven to 425°F. Preheat broiler.
Place water and salt in a large bowl. Dribble in chickpea flour, whisking constantly until well mixed.
Stir in olive oil; let mixture stand for about 30 minutes.
Grease a heavy skillet with 2 TBS olive oil; pour in batter. Place under broiler for 2–4 minutes, until the batter is slightly blistered.
Remove and place in the oven; bake for 2–5 minutes, until cake is firm.
Remove from oven; cut into squares or wedges.
Serve with finely chopped tomatoes, or a salad, and fresh bread.

Olive Oil-Caper Paste
(Tapenade)

Olives grow all over the southern Mediterranean coast of Europe, and the wild caper bush, with its magnificent blooms, can be found there as well. The paste is served with fresh bread as a snack or appetizer.

2 cans pitted black olives, drained and chopped fine
2 TBS capers, drained, minced fine
3 small dill pickles, minced fine
olive oil from 1 tin of anchovies
3 tins anchovies (in olive oil), chopped fine
2 TBS lemon juice

Mix olives, capers, and pickles well. Add olive oil and mix well.
Add anchovies.
Add lemon juice and blend well with all other ingredients.
Cover and leave at room temperature for several hours prior to serving.
Store any remainders in a covered container in the refrigerator; topped with 1 or 2 tablespoons of oil to keep out the air, this spread will keep for a month.
Serve on toasted or fresh French bread.

Almond and Melon Pie
(Galapian)

This Monegasque almond pie is originally made with candied melon slices and glazed with lavender flower honey. Serve as dessert or with coffee or tea as a snack.

Pastry

½ cup butter, diced
¼ cup + 1 TBS confectioners' sugar
⅓ cup grated almonds
¼ tsp salt
⅔ cup flour
1 tsp orange blossom water or orange rind
1 egg

In a food processor, process all ingredients just until they come together.
Take out and smooth the pastry into a ball, patting with lightly floured fingers for 1–2 minutes.
Place in a plastic bag and let rest in the refrigerator for 2 hours.
On a floured surface, roll out pastry to fit a 10-inch pie plate or tart pan.
If using pie plate, crimp edges decoratively; for tart pan, smooth top edge of pastry.
Prick pastry, setting a sheet of foil and some baking weights to keep pastry from puffing up.
Bake at 375°F for 10 minutes; remove foil and weights.
Lower heat to 350°F and bake for another 5–8 minutes or until golden. Let cool slightly.
Place fruit evenly on pastry.
Spread almond filling over, and decorate with "flowers" made of candied cherry slices.
Bake at 375°F for 12–15 minutes or until golden brown.
Brush honey glaze over pie while still warm.

Almond Filling

4 egg whites
3 TBS sugar
¾ cup finely ground almonds
¼ cup sugar

Beat the egg whites to soft peaks.
Add sugar gradually and beat till stiff.
Blend together ground almonds and sugar; fold gently into egg whites.

Fruit Filling and Decoration

1½ cups fresh cantaloupe, sliced into ¼ × 2-inch pieces
5–7 candied cherries, sliced

Honey Glaze

3–4 TBS boiling water
2 TBS honey

Stir boiling water into honey to enable it to be brushed for a glaze.

MONGOLIA

Landlocked Mongolia is the sixth largest country in Asia and the eighteenth largest in the world. In the thirteenth century the most famous Mongol ruler, Genghis Khan, founded an empire that spanned central Europe and East Asia. Mongolia later came under Chinese and Russian satellite control, becoming self-governing in 1990.

Mongolia comprises vast open grasslands, inhospitable mountain ranges, and desert, with about 10 percent forest. Long, very cold winters and short, very hot summers; the seasonal nomadic lifestyle; and water and soil conditions deter large-scale agriculture.

Besides the majority Mongol ethnic group, there are Kazakhs, Uighur, Tibetans, and other minorities. Most are nomads or semi-settled, herding goats, sheep, horses, camels, and cattle. A minority are Muslim, but most are polytheistic Buddhists.

Wheat and a limited range of fruit and vegetables are grown in some regions. A few semi-settled Mongolians grow carrots, potatoes, or onions for home use. Mongolians who live near lakes supplement their mostly dairy diet with fish, but the majority of Mongolians do not eat fish as a rule.

Although influenced by Russia and China, Mongolian cooking is typical of other nomadic-style cooking, being simple and based predominantly on dairy products and rice, flat bread, or noodles, supplemented rarely by dried strips of meat. Among the rural Mongolians with herds, animals are only slaughtered for fresh meat on special occasions.

Traditional families live in *gers* (round felt-wrapped yurts), and cooking methods are those possible within the *ger*, or, when the family is on the move, on outdoor fires. Mongolians practice nomadic hospitality and offer unexpected guests shelter and meals.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: fresh and dried meat (goat, sheep, camel); dairy products—fresh milk, clotted cream (*urum*), fermented milk products such as yogurt, cottage cheese (*aarts*), dry curd cheese (*aaruulth*, also spelled *aaruul*); rice, fried dough fritters.
- Homemade wheat noodles, commercial (imported) pasta.
- Fresh and dried meat of camel, yak, reindeer, wild horse, other wild animals. Russian cans of meat, salmon, and crabmeat available in capital markets.

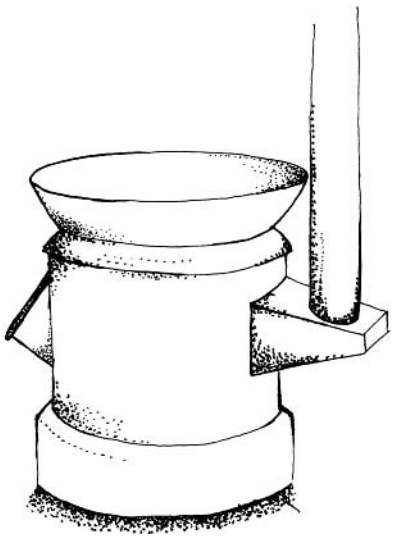
- Vegetables not widely eaten, and limited to onion, potato, carrot; in capital city and towns also beets, cabbage, cucumber, tomato, cauliflower, usually imported from China; commercial pickled vegetables (Korean-, Chinese-, or Japanese-style, imported).
- Canned, usually imported, fruit; in capital city tangerine, banana, plum, peach can be bought fresh.
- Seasonings: salt, pepper, garlic; rarely, wild chives.

Typical Dishes

- Roasted or baked meats: barbecue or shish kebab (*shorlog*), baked mutton (*khorkhog*).
- Soup: mutton soup with noodles (*guriltai shul*); Russian-style borscht in the capital.
- Fried meat pastries (*khoorshoor*).
- Russian-influenced salads of carrots or beets with cabbage, seasoned with garlic and mayonnaise or oil and vinegar, served with restaurant meals in the capital.
- Steamed dumplings with mutton or beef (*buuz*).
- Drinks: tea (made from hard-pressed blocks of Russian or Chinese tea leaves and stems) with milk and salt, drunk during meals and all other times; vodka; fermented horse milk (*airag*); local bottled citrus drinks; carbonated drinks (international brands); Western beer.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: wheat noodles; wheat bread with yogurt or cheese, often stirred into salty milk tea.
- Lunch: dairy products such as dry curd cheese (*aaruulth*) and other hard cheeses; flat bread for summer and autumn; salty milk tea; in winter and spring, meat soup with noodles, potatoes, or carrots. No dessert.
- Dinner: similar to lunch; no dessert.
- Snacks: deep-fried dough fritters or, occasionally, store-bought biscuits with salty milk tea.
- In the capital city Ulaanbaatar, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Western-style restaurants offer pizza, chicken, and fish, mainly for tourists, which Mongolians (those who can afford them) are able to sample.



COOKING STOVE

Fried Meat Pies (Khoorshoor, *also* Huurshuur)

These fried pastries, like the large meat-filled dumplings called *buuz*, are made for special occasions. They are also sold as snacks at open-air food stalls during the summer festival of *naadam*.

2 cups flour
¼ tsp salt
½ cup water to mix
oil for deep-frying

Mix ingredients together in a bowl and knead into a dough (add more water or flour as necessary to achieve a smooth consistency). Remove onto floured board and knead for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Divide into 16 pieces and roll each into a ball.
Make each ball into a circle 4 inches wide, thicker in the middle than at the edges. Place 2 tablespoons of filling onto one half of each circle, leaving the margin clear of filling.
Fold the other half over to form a crescent. Seal edges tightly with a fork or crimp into a "braided" edge.
Repeat with the rest of filling and dough.
Heat enough oil, about 4 inches deep, in a wok for deep-frying, making sure oil is well below rim.
Fry 3 or 4 pies at a time, each side for 2 minutes, until they are golden and the meat is cooked. Eat dipped in soy sauce.

Filling

1 pound fat minced meat (mutton preferred; or substitute beef, chicken, or turkey)
1½ tsp salt
½ onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 TBS water

In a food processor, mix the filling ingredients together into a firm paste.

Mutton Soup (Guriltai Shul)

This is a festive dish eaten by nomadic and semi-settled families in the Gobi desert, who live in traditional round yurts called *ger*. Noodles are always made from freshly kneaded dough, stretched into very thin, tortilla-like pancakes to be toasted briefly on a metal sheet over the *ger* cooking stove. Once cooked, the pancakes are chopped into the desired sizes and dropped into the soup. For convenience, commercially prepared noodles are used in this recipe.

2 TBS mutton fat (or substitute vegetable oil)
1 pound fat mutton, goat, or beef, cut into thin strips
2 large potatoes, peeled and diced
3 turnips, peeled and diced
2 onions, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and diced
8 cups stock (or 2 bouillon cubes dissolved in 8 cups hot water)
1 packet flat egg noodles
salt to taste

Heat the fat in a large wok and quickly brown the meat.
Add stock and simmer, covered, until meat is almost tender, about 20 minutes.

(*continued*)

Add vegetables and simmer until almost done, about 20 minutes.
Add noodles and salt and continue simmering until noodles are ready, about 10 minutes.
Serve in individual bowls.

Steamed Meat-Filled Dumplings (Buuz)

These steamed savory dumplings are made for special occasions. *Buuz* are similar to meat-filled dumplings (*bao* or *pao*) commonly eaten in northern China, and these are most likely to have originated in Mongolia. Smaller dumplings are called *bansh*, which are also steamed, or fried or boiled in soups.

½ cup white flour
½ cup whole wheat flour
½ cup water
10 ounces minced meat (fat mutton preferred, substitute turkey, chicken, or beef)
⅓ cup onion, minced fine
4 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 TBS ginger, grated
1 tsp salt

Mix flours. Add water a little at a time to make a dough. Knead well to make a shiny, elastic dough.
Roll out dough on a floured surface to $\frac{1}{8}$-inch thick.
Cut dough into 4-inch disks. Cover disks with a moist cloth to prevent drying out.
Mix meat, onions, ghee, ginger, and salt.
Place a disk of dough on your left palm (if you are right-handed). Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the middle.
Bring the fingers on your left hand together to cup the disk; pleat the dough edges to enclose the filling, but do not seal completely so that steam can escape.
Steam over water in a steamer (about 20 minutes) until done.
Eat with mutton soup or on its own, washed down with salted buttered tea.

Baked Lamb (Khorkhog, *also* Horhog)

Sheep or lamb are slaughtered to mark the arrival of a guest. Traditionally, this dish was made with a whole sheep or lamb chopped up, and with no seasoning except salt and onions. The following recipe has been adjusted to smaller servings and a modern kitchen.

2 pounds lamb on the bone, cut in serving pieces
1 pound onions, chopped coarsely
2–3 garlic cloves, or to taste, minced
1 inch or more fresh ginger root, or to taste, grated

salt to taste
dried chili to taste, cored, seeded, and minced
1 thick ovenproof casserole with a tight-fitting lid
several handfuls smooth pebbles, about 2–3 inches in diameter, washed thoroughly

Mix meat, onions, garlic, and ginger; season with salt and chili.
Heat oven to maximum, and place pebbles inside. Heat for ½ hour.
Place a layer of the meat mixture in the bottom of the casserole.
Using tongs, carefully transfer hot pebbles in a layer over the meat.
Repeat with a layer of meat, then pebbles, until meat is all used up. Be very careful while transferring the hot pebbles not to touch or drop them.
Cover casserole and seal tightly with foil.
Leave for 3 hours inside turned-off oven.
Unwrap casserole and discard pebbles. Serve meat and broth over rice.

Deep-Fried Fritters (Boortsog)

Boortsog are eaten instead of bread for most meals, as they keep well for almost a month. They are popular as snacks with salted milky tea and are taken along during long trips. The frying oil normally used is leftover fat from cooking meat, giving *boortsog* a distinctive aroma much appreciated by Mongolians. Substitute any vegetable oil.

a pinch of salt
⅔ cup sugar
½ cup butter
warm water
2 cups flour
oil for deep-frying
powdered sugar

Dissolve salt, sugar, and butter in warm water.
Mix in flour and knead well and thoroughly into a smooth, soft, and elastic dough.
The kneading process is very important: the dough must be kneaded until no air remains.
Cut the dough to check if the dough is sufficiently kneaded: it must be smooth and soft throughout, with no holes or air bubbles.
Let the dough rest, covered with a moist cloth, after kneading for about 15–20 minutes.
Roll out on a floured surface to ¼-inch thick.
Cut dough into strips 2 inches wide.
Cut out into 2-inch squares or small triangles with a sharp knife.
In the middle of each piece, make two shallow cuts. This is to let any remaining air out, as well as for decor.
Heat oil over medium heat. Fry *boortsog* in small batches until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels or a rack until cool.
Dust with powdered sugar for a snack, or leave plain, to be eaten with jam, butter, or cheese.

MONTENEGRO

A relatively new country in the Balkans on the Adriatic Sea coast, Montenegro was part of the former Yugoslav Republic and was federated with Serbia until June 2006. The country has a largely mountainous terrain with a temperate climate.

The cuisine is strongly influenced by the Turks who controlled the area for centuries.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are a mix of potatoes and flour dishes. People eat a variety of breads (bread is almost always on the table), noodles, and rice.
- Pork and lamb are favorite meats.
- Fish and seafood are great favorites along the coast.
- Fruit, particularly soft fruit such as plums, apricots, and grapes, are eaten and go to making wine and liquors.
- Various forms of cooked vegetables are prepared for stews, relishes, and pickles, which accompany most meals. Vegetables include carrots, eggplant, cabbage, tomatoes, peppers, onions, garlic, beans.

Typical Dishes

- Pancakes with both savory and sweet fillings.
- Vegetable dishes, including spreads (*pindzur*) and stews (*gyvetch*).
- Sweet pepper or eggplant relishes.
- Roast meats, particularly pork and mutton.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day plus snacks are usually eaten.
- Place settings are European standard.
- Breakfast: bread and jam with coffee, or dumplings.
- Lunch: the heaviest meal of the day, usually with several courses, including a salad, soup, main dish of meat or fish, and a sweet, very often washed down by wine for all.
- Dinner: a light meal of pancakes, bread with vegetable dips; or similar to breakfast.
- Snacks, sweet or savory, are served with coffee.

Vegetable Spread (Pindzur)

Pindzur has many variations and is popular as a salad all over the Balkans.

1 pound large red bell peppers (or preferably sweet paprika peppers)
½ pound unripe tomatoes
½ pound eggplants
½ cup oil
salt to taste
3 cloves garlic, finely minced

Dry-fry the peppers until well blistered in a heavy skillet over medium heat.
Bake the tomatoes and eggplants in a moderate oven for about 45 minutes, or until soft.
Peel the peppers and tomatoes. Slit the eggplants and remove the pulp.
Chop all the vegetables fine by hand or in a blender or food processor.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in the skillet.
Add vegetables, then pour in remaining oil gradually, stirring all the time.
Cook until all oil is absorbed.
Add garlic; mix and season to taste.
Place into a serving bowl and cool well before serving.
Serve with grilled meat or warm corn bread.

Pashtrovic-Style Macaroni (Pashtrovski Makaruli)

This is a simple peasant dish that blends Italian and Greek influences.

1 pound whole-wheat macaroni
¼ cup olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
½ cup salty ewe's cheese (*brinza* or *feta*), cut into small cubes

Boil noodles in salted water till tender but still firm, about 8 minutes.
Strain and discard water.
Toss the noodles with olive oil, seasoning, and cheese.
Serve hot or cold.

Balchic-Style Baked Meat (Balshica Tava)

Balchic is a small town famous for its veal.

2 pounds boneless veal (or substitute pork, chicken, or turkey), cut into stewing pieces
¼ pound carrots
¼ pound onions
½ cup parsley, finely minced

(*continued*)

1 bay leaf
salt to taste
2 TBS butter
3 eggs
pinch of salt
1 cup sour cream
2 cups milk
3 TBS parsley for garnish

Simmer the meat with the carrots, onions, parsley, bay leaf, and salt for 20–30 minutes, or until the meat is tender.
Grease a heavy ovenproof pan or casserole dish with butter, and place the meat mixture in it.
Preheat the oven to 350°F.
Meanwhile make the topping: beat together the eggs, pinch of salt, cream, and milk.
Pour evenly over the meat mixture and bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes.
Remove from oven, and serve in bowls garnished with fresh parsley.

Potato Porridge (Mocani Kacamak)

Kacamak derives from the term *kajmak* (clotted cream), which in Montenegro became the term for a porridgy dish.

2 pounds potatoes, peeled and cubed
water to cover
salt to taste
4 TBS cornmeal
4 TBS heavy cream
¼ pound crumbled (not grated) semi-hard cheese
1 cup yogurt for serving

Boil potatoes in salted water until almost done, about 15 minutes.
Sprinkle with cornmeal, reduce heat, and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring constantly.
Pour off any remaining water.
Remove pot from heat and mash the potato and cornmeal mixture until smooth.
In another pot heat the cream and cheese until hot but not completely melted.
Pour the cream and cheese mixture over the mashed mixture; stir thoroughly.
Serve hot, topped with yogurt.

Stuffed Kale (Japraci)

Stuffed dishes are common throughout the Levant and the Balkans and are often eaten as the main dish.

2 pounds large kale (or collards, Savoy or Chinese cabbage), tough ribs trimmed flat
2–3 TBS oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 pound ground beef, veal, turkey, or chicken
3 ounces uncooked rice, rinsed and well drained
salt and pepper to taste
2 TBS parsley, finely minced
juice of 1 lemon
yogurt for serving

Blanch the leaves in boiling salted water to soften for a couple of minutes. (If using cabbage, blanch the entire head and detach the leaves as they soften.)
Remove leaves and plunge into cold water to arrest cooking. Drain and set aside until needed.
Meanwhile prepare the stuffing. In a frying pan, heat oil and sauté onions until golden.
Add meat and sauté for about 10 minutes, or until the meat has changed color.
Stir in the rice and fry for 5 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, and parsley, and mix thoroughly.
Remove from heat and let the stuffing cool.
Sort through the leaves and reserve the best ones for stuffing. Set aside any imperfect ones for lining the cooking pan.
To wrap the rolls: lay a whole leaf face up on a large plate or chopping board (the base closest to you and the top away from you).
Place about 1–2 tablespoons of the filling (depending on the size of the leaf and number of leaves) on the base of the leaf. Roll the base of the leaf over and away from you to enclose the filling once.
Then bring the left side of the leaf snugly across the filling; then the right.
Proceed to roll tightly from the base until the leaf completely encloses the filling. Fasten the ends with a toothpick, if needed.
Line the bottom of a heavy-bottomed saucepan with a layer of spare leaves.
Pack the rolls, open side down, neatly and tightly in one layer. Lay another layer on top, until all the rolls are in.
Gently (to avoid dislodging the rolls) pour lightly salted hot water mixed with lemon juice, just slightly below the topmost rolls.
Lay more leaves on top, and place a small plate face down to keep the rolls from floating.
Gently simmer at very low heat for 2 hours.
Allow to cool down in the pan for at least 30 minutes before serving. These also taste good, if not better, the day after, when they have mellowed.
Refrigerate once they have cooled down to room temperature.
Serve topped with yogurt.

Fried Dumplings (Malisorske Priganice)

These are served for dessert or as a snack, and, like most fried sweets, are best eaten freshly made.

1 pound flour
pinch of salt
2 tsp baking powder
2 TBS butter, diced
1 cup water
hot water and 1 tsp salt, as needed
4 TBS butter mixed with 3 TBS olive oil
½ cup honey

Combine flour, salt, and baking powder. Rub in the diced butter until the mixture is like coarse meal.
Stir in water to make a dough.
Knead for 10 minutes or more until smooth and elastic.
Divide into eight portions, and shape into balls.
In a large pot, bring salted water to a simmer. Drop the balls in, one at a time. Allow them to cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes, from the time they start to float.
Remove the balls, drain, and pat dry with paper towels.
Heat the butter and oil in a frying pan.
Place a few balls to fry gently. Press on the balls lightly to flatten them so that they fry evenly. When brown underneath, turn and cook until brown. Drain on a rack and keep warm while frying the rest.
Serve at once with honey.

MOROCCO

Morocco is a North African country at the extreme northwest of the continent, opposite Spain. Wide coastal plains and craggy mountains with temperate to hot climate are ideal for Mediterranean-type fruits and vegetables, and for raising sheep.

The population comprises Muslim Arabs and Berbers. The former relations with Arab Andalusia in Spain (many refugees of the Reconquista settled in Morocco), extensive trade ties with the Muslim Mediterranean, Turkey, and sub-Saharan Africa, and French colonial influence have combined to create a unique and sophisticated cuisine. The existence of a royal court for many centuries has also contributed greatly to the variety and sophistication of the cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are rice, flat bread traditionally baked in a common village or neighborhood oven, and wheat couscous (steamed semolina; see Algeria for the box "Couscous").
- Lamb is the preferred meat. Fish, chicken, pigeon, and beef are also used extensively. Eggs are a common dish for all classes.
- Vegetables: hot and sweet peppers, carrots, onions, garlic, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant, olives, beans.
- Fruits: grapes, figs, pomegranates, dates, plums.
- Moroccan cuisine uses many spices subtly. Flavorings include ginger, cinnamon (for both savory and sweet dishes), saffron, cumin, turmeric, and fresh mint.

Typical Dishes

- *Chakchouka* (eggs cooked in a vegetable stew).
- *Tajine*, a slow, simmered stew with meat or chicken and vegetables, comes in many forms.
- Couscous and stew flavored with saffron.
- Charcoal-grilled or fried fish; shad is a popular fish.
- Chicken dishes: stewed with olives; with chickpeas; with almonds and saffron (*tajine t'faia*); in a sweet-savory pie (*bastilla,* also *bisteeya*).

TAJINE POT

- Skewered grilled meats (kebabs, also called *brochettes*).
- Vegetables (peppers, grape leaves, eggplants) stuffed with rice, or a mixture of rice and meat.
- Eggplant dishes: as a salad after roasting, fried, baked, stewed.
- Lentils, beans, and chickpea dishes, especially in *harira,* a soup eaten in the evening during the Ramadan fast.
- Rich honey-drenched sweets with nuts.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and extensive snacks.
- Food is generally eaten from a central dish or tray on a carpet on the floor, with diners helping themselves by hand or with a spoon. Families eat together, but when entertaining, males and females generally eat separately.
- Lunch is the main meal, consisting of numerous courses: hot and cold salads to start; then a *tajine* or stew; a main dish of meat or poultry; followed by couscous with its accompanying meat and vegetables; sweetened mint tea to finish.
- The evening meal (except during the fasting month of Ramadan when it becomes the only and main meal) is less elaborate and based largely on vegetables or eggs.
- Formal meals often end with some form of sweet, usually sweetened with honey or syrup and often containing dates or other fruit.
- The favorite and most common drink is tea. This is heavily sweetened and strongly laced with fresh mint. Tea is drunk at all hours of the day and serves to close many meals. Coffee is also drunk extensively, usually very sweet and black.

Tomatoes and Eggs (Chakchouka)

This is a popular dish for any meal, especially breakfast and supper.

3 TBS oil
3 large onions, sliced
3 large tomatoes, peeled and sliced
2 large green bell peppers, chopped
1 small chili pepper, cored, seeded, and minced
1 TBS vinegar
1 tsp salt
4 eggs
1 green bell pepper, grilled, skinned, and cut into thin strips

Heat oil and cook onions in a 10-inch frying pan until golden brown.
Add all the ingredients except the eggs and pepper strips. Simmer until the vegetables are reduced to pulp, about 20 minutes.
Make four indentations in the vegetables and carefully break an egg into each one.

Cover the frying pan and cook over low heat until eggs are well set (some people scramble the eggs lightly in the vegetables).
Garnish each serving with strips of green pepper.

Braised Chicken with Olives (Tajine)

Long-simmering stews are a feature of Moroccan cuisine, and are served with either bread, with which the stew is scooped up, or couscous. This is a typically Moroccan delicacy.

1½ ounces butter
1 chicken, cut into serving pieces (or about 2 pounds turkey pieces with bone)
½ pint water
2 medium onions, chopped
½ tsp ground ginger
⅛ tsp paprika
¼ tsp powdered chili pepper
2 heaped TBS parsley, minced
6 ounces pitted whole green olives
2 TBS lemon juice or ¼ cup thin slices of pickled lemon (available in Middle Eastern groceries)
2 level TBS flour mixed with 2 TBS water

Heat butter until frothing subsides, in a large saucepan. Quickly brown the chicken.
Add water, onions, ginger, paprika, chili pepper, and parsley to browned meat. Mix well.
Cover and simmer gently for 45 minutes.
Add olives shortly before removing from heat.
Place chicken with olives on a heated serving dish and sprinkle with lemon juice.
Thicken pan juices with flour and water paste (add water, if necessary, to make up to 1 cup gravy).
Cook for 3 minutes over low heat, stirring constantly, or until the flour has lost its raw taste.
Pour sauce over chicken and olives.

Couscous Marrakech

Couscous is the Moroccan national dish and is almost always made there of semolina flour. This version is from the ancient imperial city of Marrakech.

Couscous

(or see Algeria for the box "Couscous" for general couscous instructions)
2 cups couscous (available from Asian sections of most supermarkets)
1 cup cold water
pinch of salt
1–2 TBS olive oil

(*continued*)

Moisten couscous by sprinkling with a little water in a large bowl.
Stir well with a fork or fingers, breaking up all lumps. Allow to stand for 10 minutes to swell.
Place couscous in a cheesecloth-lined colander or the top portion of a couscousier.
Place the colander over the stew pan, and steam for 30 minutes, uncovered.
Break up the mass every 10 minutes with a fork.
Remove the couscous and transfer to a large bowl.
Sprinkle more water over the couscous, salt, and olive oil.
Stir thoroughly with a fork or fingers. Return couscous to the colander and steam for another 30 minutes, or until tender.

Stew

¼ cup olive oil
2 cups onions, chopped coarsely
2½ pounds boneless lamb (or beef) cut in 1-inch cubes
1 chicken, cut into small pieces
1 pound carrots, peeled and cut in 1-inch chunks (or half carrots, half turnips)
½ tsp (20 threads) saffron or powdered ginger
1 tsp salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
2 quarts water
1 pound fresh tomatoes, quartered
1 tsp chili flakes or cayenne
1 pound yellow squash, peeled and cut in 2-inch slices
12 ounces string beans
14 ounces canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*), drained
½ pound black seedless raisins

Heat oil in the bottom of a couscousier or saucepan and sauté onions until soft.
Add the meat, chicken, carrots, saffron, salt, pepper, and water, and simmer for 45 minutes.
Fit the top pan of the couscousier (or the colander) with the couscous grain over the stew; allow stew to simmer gently for 30 minutes.
Add all remaining ingredients to stew, and correct seasoning.
Cook for about 20–25 minutes or until vegetables are soft but still separate and not mushy.
To serve: mound the couscous on a large, round serving platter.
Make a large crater in the center.
Arrange meat and vegetables in the center. Pour some of the sauce over all, placing the remaining sauce on the table for diners to add if they so wish.
Garnish with minced parsley.
This is traditionally served to follow the main meat dish.

Chicken with Chickpeas (Gdra)

Chickpeas are a favorite legume and are often combined with meat or poultry for main meals.

3 TBS butter
20 threads saffron or ½ tsp powdered ginger
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground pepper
3 medium onions, finely chopped
4–6 serving pieces of chicken
1 14-ounce can chickpeas (*garbanzos*)
water to cover
1 pound uncooked rice, rinsed and drained
¼ cup cilantro
1 large bunch parsley
juice of 1 lemon

Melt butter in a saucepan.
Stir in the saffron, salt, pepper, and 1 onion.
Add chicken and chickpeas. Cover with water and simmer for 30 minutes.
Place rice in a clean muslin bag. Tie the bag securely and add to the pan. The rice should be completely immersed in the cooking liquid.
Remove the bag of rice after 15–20 minutes and keep warm in a low oven.
To the saucepan, add cilantro, parsley, and the remaining onions.
Continue cooking until chicken is tender, another 20–25 minutes.
Serve chicken in the center of a large dish; surround with the rice and chickpeas. Pour some sauce over the chicken, and put the rest in a sauce boat or bowl to be placed at the table for diners to help themselves.
Drizzle lemon juice over the entire dish.

Almond Croissants (Kab el Ghzal)

These pastries are shaped like gazelle horns, hence their Moroccan name. Marzipan was invented by the Moors of Andalusia, and when they were expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century, they brought the art with them to add to Moroccan cuisine.

1 pound flour
about 5 ounces butter, melted
water
¼ tsp orange blossom water or rosewater
½ pound marzipan, diced

Heat oven to 325°F.
In a food processor, blend flour, 2 ounces melted butter, and water just until the mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough and knead on a floured surface for 10–15 minutes until elastic. Put the dough into a covered container and allow to rest for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.
Meanwhile prepare the almond filling: in the food processor, blend the marzipan, orange blossom water, and butter until well mixed and marzipan is softened. Set aside until needed.
Divide the dough into 3 portions. Roll out on a lightly floured surface ⅛-inch thick.

(*continued*)

Cut into 6-inch-wide strips with a sharp knife.
Cut the strips on the diagonal, creating triangles about 3 inches wide at the base.
While working, cover the pastries with a moist cloth to prevent drying.
To assemble the pastries:
Brush melted butter on the pastry triangle.
Take about 1 tablespoon of almond filling, press lightly but quickly to flatten, and lay on the base of the triangle.
Roll up the pastry and filling together, starting from the base of the triangle, and ending at the apex.
Pinch the two ends up to form the gazelle's horns.
Prick the pastry in several places with a pin to avoid bubbling while baking.
Cover rolled up horns with a moist towel and continue with remaining pastry and filling.
Place horns on a buttered baking sheet; bake for about 15 minutes, or just until very faintly colored.
Serve with coffee or mint tea.

MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique is a Southeast African country along the Indian Ocean opposite Madagascar. It has a 2,000-mile-long coastline, making fish and seafood very popular. The coastal plain is wide and tropical, drier in the south and well watered to the north. The northwest of the country on the border with Zimbabwe is mountainous and cooler.

A former colony of Portugal (until 1975), Mozambique suffered a devastating 20-year civil war after independence. Some agricultural areas are still mined, making life difficult for the population, most of whom are subsistence farmers.

The population is composed of many local groups who speak different languages. The common language is Portuguese. About half the population are Christians, less than one-fourth Muslims, and the rest belong to indigenous religions.

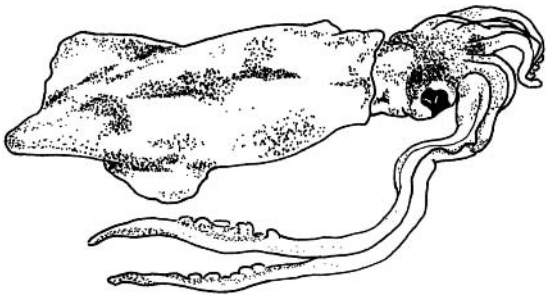
The Portuguese influence on cooking is very palpable, particularly in the large cities along the coast. Inland, the food is more like the rest of southern and eastern Africa.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: maize and cassava millet in the form of stiff porridge. In the cities, wheat breads are popular. Rice for those who can afford it.
- Meat: chicken is the most common meat. Beef, goat, pork.
- Fish: a variety of coastal fish. In inland areas, riverine fish, both fresh and dried. Seafood, including *camarao* (prawns) and *lulas* (squid).
- Vegetables: onions, carrots, cabbage, pumpkin and squashes, peppers, beans.
- Fruits: coconuts, bananas, mangoes, papaya, tree-tomato, a variety of non-domesticated forest fruit.

Typical Dishes

- Soups (*sopa*) of meat and vegetables.
- Rice cooked with seafood.
- Grilled meats; freshly caught, grilled fish are very popular.



SQUID

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks preferred.
- Families generally eat together. Traditional rural families sit on a mat around a common pot, and urban families eat European style with European place settings. Dishes are served together on the table, for diners to help themselves.
- Breakfast: bread, rolls, or toast with milky coffee.
- Lunch: three dishes, including an appetizer, a main dish of meat fowl or fish, and a dessert such as an egg custard (*pudin*).
- Supper: usually eaten fairly late. Several dishes, which might include a soup, fish or seafood, meat, rice, and a dessert.
- Coffee and tea, and many kinds of fruit drinks are popular.

Green Bean Soup (Sopa de Feijao Verde)

This dish is served as a starter.

3 cups water
2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 medium tomato, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
salt and pepper to taste
2 cups fresh string or French beans, cut diagonally in thin slices (or one pack cleaned, finely sliced green beans)

Bring water to a boil in a large pot.
Add potatoes, tomato, onion, salt, and pepper.
Simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
Puree in food mill or blender. Add water if necessary to make a thin puree.
Return to pot and add string beans.
Simmer for about 10 minutes until beans are tender.
Correct the seasoning.
Serve hot.

Clam and Peanut Stew (Matata)

Mozambique's long coastline has made seafood a major source of protein for the country's population. The clams in this recipe can be replaced by any shellfish.

½ cup onions, chopped fine
1 TBS vegetable oil
2 cups fresh or canned clams, chopped
¾ cup peanuts, ground fine (or ½ cup natural peanut butter)
1 tomato, chopped fine

1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 tsp red chili flakes
1 pound fresh, young pumpkin leaves (or substitute spinach leaves)

Sauté onions in oil until translucent.
Add clams, peanuts, tomato, salt, pepper, and chili flakes.
Simmer gently for 30 minutes.
Add greens.
Cover tightly and serve as soon as leaves have wilted (about 2–3 minutes).
Serve over rice.

Hot Pepper Sauce, Mozambique Version (Piri-Piri)

The long period of Portuguese occupation was interfertile for both Portugal and its colonies in terms of food. This is the Mozambican version of a common Afro-Portuguese sauce. The sauce is placed on the table in every restaurant and virtually every home.

4 TBS lemon juice
4 TBS olive oil
4 TBS coarsely ground red pepper or chili flakes
1 TBS salt
1 tsp crushed garlic or garlic powder

Combine all ingredients in a small glass bowl.
Serve over meat, fish, and vegetable dishes.

Chicken Zambezia (Galinha à Zambeziana)

Zambezia province in the country's northeast provides Mozambique's most luscious recipes, often flavored with coconut milk.

4–6 serving portions of chicken
½ cup *piri-piri* sauce
1 cup butter, melted

Marinate the chicken pieces in *piri-piri* sauce in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours.
Add butter to the marinade before cooking, and turn chicken pieces to thoroughly coat them with the marinade.
Broil the chicken, or grill over charcoal fire.
Cook for 10–15 minutes on each side, over medium coals, basting several times with the sauce.
Serve with rice.

Papaya and Egg Pudding (Ovos Moles de Papaia)

Huge papayas are sold from barrows throughout the large cities, and many households in the city and in the countryside have a papaya tree.

1 medium-sized ripe papaya
½ cup lime juice (from about 3–4 limes, or substitute 3 lemons), strained
½ cup water
2 cups sugar
4 cloves, whole
1 medium cinnamon stick
5 egg yolks
½ tsp grated rind from limes
1 tsp powdered cinnamon for garnish

Peel, seed, and coarsely chop the papaya.
Puree papaya, lime juice, water, and sugar in a blender or food processor until smooth.
Place puree in a stainless steel (not aluminum) pan.
Add cloves and cinnamon.
Bring to a quick boil, stirring constantly.
Cook until the mixture reaches thread stage (about 230–234°F).
Remove the pan from heat and discard the cloves and cinnamon.
Beat the egg yolks vigorously in a deep heat-proof bowl until lemon yellow in color.
Pour the hot mixture into the egg yolks in a thin, steady stream, while continuing to beat constantly (or use a hand mixer).
Continue beating the mixture until it is smooth and thickened.
Place mixture into four dessert bowls and cool.
Chill and serve, dusted with lime rind and cinnamon, if desired.

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Myanmar was a part of Britain's Indian empire until independence in 1948. The climate is tropical, with the Irrawady River drainage forming a huge, well-watered plain ideal for growing rice. The highlands are lush, covered by tropical vegetation. Tropical lowlands produce rice, corn, fruits, and vegetables; the highlands produce tea.

The country is peopled by over a hundred ethnic groups, predominantly Burmans; endogenous Shan, Karen, Naga, and other minorities; and Chinese and Indian immigrants.

Food in Myanmar is influenced by its neighbors India and China and tends to include spicy hot curries; the Burmese pride themselves on their ability to eat hot foods.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: rice, vegetables, fish.
- Sea and fresh-water (from Irrawady River and tributaries) fish, seafood (oyster, shrimp, clam).
- Chicken, duck, goat, pork, wild game (quail, squirrel, deer), soybean products (*tofu*).
- Core (heart) of the banana plant, bamboo shoot, beans, potato, cabbage, corn, green vegetables (such as roselle leaves), wild mushrooms.
- Pineapple, papaya, mango, melon, banana, orange, mangosteen, avocado, highland strawberries, peanuts, sesame, sugarcane, coconut.
- Seasonings: curry spices, cilantro and other herbs, pressed shrimp and fish paste (*ngapi*).

Typical Dishes

- Indian-influenced curries: very spicy, well-reduced stews of goat, pork, beef, duck, chicken, and fish or seafood.
- Chinese-influenced noodles: rice noodles in fish soup (*mohingar*), wheat noodles in coconut chicken soup (*ohn-no-kauk-swey*).
- Soups: sour soup (of fish or seafood, flavored with citrus juice, tamarind, or roselle leaves with bamboo shoots), sweet soup with mushrooms.

PREPARING BANANA, TARO, OR CABBAGE LEAVES AS WRAPPERS

Warm the leaves for half a minute in a pot of boiling water. This makes them easier to manipulate for folding.

Cut off the center rib of each banana leaf, and use the two large sheets thus produced to cut into smaller sheets as needed. Cabbage, taro, and lotus leaves also have their tough ribs removed, except they need not be cut further.

Keep in mind that some of the wrappers (taro leaf and cabbage) are edible, whereas others (banana leaf and lotus leaf) are not, and must be discarded.

In a pinch, you can substitute 10 × 10-inch (or larger) sheets of aluminum foil for the inedible leaves, though you ought to keep in mind that the leaves not only provide a container but also add specific flavors to the dish, which aluminum foil will not. Line the foil with one or two lettuce or cabbage leaves, if desired, to evoke an approximate flavor.

- Vegetable dishes: green tea leaf salad (*let phet thoke*), ginger salad (*gin thoke*), fried gourd or banana, stir-fried bean sprouts with bean curd.
- Sweets: steamed or fried confections of rice, semolina, or sago with coconut and palm sugar, often wrapped in banana leaves, such as the cone-shaped *monpetok* (Hidden Treasure) (see box "Preparing Banana, Taro, or Cabbage Leaves as Wrappers").
- Drinks: strong sugary tea with milk; sugarcane juice.

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: rice noodles in fish soup (*mohingar*, also spelled *moat hin har*); fried rice and peas; steamed sticky rice with deep-fried vegetables; sweet and savory rice cakes; *nan pya* (Indian-style flat bread); plain green tea, sweet, milky tea, or coffee. Many have breakfast at cafes.
- Lunch and dinner are very similar: rice, curried meat, fish, or poultry, stir-fried vegetables or parboiled vegetables, sour soup of fish or vegetables, and fish or shrimp paste relish. Or, for a light lunch, noodles in soup. Meals often end with savory offerings, such as a salad of green tea leaf or ginger, or *sui gi mok*, a cream of wheat cake with poppy seeds. A traditional after-meal treat is an astringent betel nut chew, made of ground betel palm nut mixed with lime powder, tobacco, or mint, wrapped in pepper leaf and chewed like gum. Betel chewers end up with orange-reddish teeth.
- Snacks: batter-fried gourd (*boothee-kyaw*), sweet and savory steamed or fried rice cakes, vegetable salads, noodles in soup.

Ginger Salad (Gin Thoke)

This is one of two typical salads served after a meal or eaten at any time as a snack. The other is pickled green tea leaf salad. Both are similarly flavored with peanuts, chilies, dried shrimp, and other condiments. These two salads are eaten throughout the country and served everywhere—at street stalls, markets, and restaurants.

2 cloves garlic, sliced
¼ cup cooked lentils, broad beans, or chickpeas
1 banana, sliced into rings
¼ cup green bell pepper, sliced
¼ cup peanuts, shelled
1 green chili pepper, seeded and sliced into rings
¼ cup dried ground shrimp (available in Asian and specialty markets)
¼ cup toasted sesame seeds
½ cup sliced pickled ginger (sushi relish, available in Japanese stores)
corn or other oil for frying

Fry garlic over low heat in 1 TBS of corn oil until just golden brown. Set aside.
Fry separately lentils, banana, green pepper, and peanuts in 1–2 TBS oil at medium to high heat for about 2–3 minutes. Set aside.
Assemble salad in individual bowls: arrange the fried lentils, banana, green pepper, and peanuts next to each other.
Sprinkle with garlic, chili, shrimp, sesame seeds, and ginger.
Each diner adds dressing at the table, and mixes (or not, as desired) everything before eating.

Dressing

3 TBS fish sauce (available in Asian and specialty markets)
4 tsp fresh lemon or lime juice
4 TBS corn oil

Whisk sauce ingredients; drizzle over vegetables.

Wheat Noodles in Coconut Chicken Soup (Ohn-no-kauk-swey)

This dish is second only to rice noodles in fish soup (*mohingar*) as the most typical dish for eating at any time: breakfast, snack, or as an accompaniment to lunch or dinner. *Mohingar* is often claimed to be the national dish. Both are served everywhere, from cafes and street stalls to restaurants, and of course made at home. Slices of onion, fried rice crackers, fresh lemon juice, roasted chili powder, and all sorts of garnishes are added at the table.

4 large portions chicken, quarters or legs
8 cups water
5 TBS fish sauce (*nuoc mam* or *patis*)
3 TBS vegetable oil
1 tsp salt
1 TBS or less chili flakes (optional)
¼ cup thick coconut milk
1 or 2 chicken stock cubes (optional)
2 onions, quartered
3 pounds fresh Chinese egg noodles (or dried, soaked 10 minutes in cold water, then simmered for 2 minutes in boiling water, and drained)

Garnishes

3 hard-boiled eggs, shelled and sliced
1 onion, sliced fine
chili flakes
cilantro, chopped

(*continued*)

Simmer chicken in water and fish sauce for 15–20 minutes.
Remove chicken, reserving stock. Let chicken cool. Shred meat and discard bones. Set aside.
Heat 1 TBS oil and salt. Add chili flakes and fry for 1 minute on low heat.
Add coconut milk and reserved chicken stock, mixing well.
Add chicken stock cubes if necessary to make a well-flavored stock.
Add quartered onions and simmer for 30 minutes or more, until needed.
To assemble: just before serving, heat 2 tablespoons oil in a wok. Stir-fry noodles for about 5–8 minutes.
Distribute noodles into four soup bowls.
Add the shredded chicken meat to the simmering soup and allow to heat through.
Ladle hot soup into the bowls, making sure each diner gets some shredded chicken.
Place garnishes in separate small bowls.
Each diner takes garnishes to add as desired.

Gourd Fritters (Boothee Kyaw)

This is a common accompaniment to rice or wheat noodle soups and can also be made with bananas. Zucchini substitutes for the original gourd. The fritters are dipped into a hot and sour shrimp paste relish (see the next recipe). These are also commonly served after meals as a savory dessert.

3 TBS rice flour
1 TBS sticky rice flour (also called glutinous rice flour, and packets are sometimes labelled "*mochikō*" in Japanese and Oriental food stores)
2 TBS or less water
2–3 TBS cornstarch
4 zucchini or firm, semi-ripe banana, quartered lengthwise and sliced into 3- to 4-inch pieces, wiped dry
oil for deep-frying

Mix the two flours with enough water to make a thick batter.
Dust the zucchini pieces with cornstarch. (A fast, easy way to do this is to put cornstarch in a paper or plastic bag with the zucchini and shake thoroughly.)
Heat enough oil for deep-frying to about 350°F in a thick-bottomed pan or wok.
Dip zucchini into batter and fry a few at a time so as not to lower the oil temperature.
Drain on paper towels. Serve warm with wheat noodle soup (see the previous recipe) with a dollop of shrimp paste relish.

Shrimp Paste Relish (Balachaung, Ngapi Kyaw)

No meal in Myanmar is complete without some form of fish sauce. The simplest is a mix of fish sauce, fresh citrus juice, and slices of chili. The dish given here is a more elaborate version, consisting of fried shrimp paste with pounded dried shrimps, crushed garlic and onions, and chilies. This relish is also eaten with bread as a sandwich. Another variation is roasted shrimp paste with sesame oil and a squeeze of lime, frequently eaten with leftover rice or at regular meals. These sauces or relishes are also used to flavor quickly boiled green vegetables served as a salad accompaniment to main meals. Although only 1 chili is used in this recipe, most relishes would use 10 or more for a really fiery sauce.

2 TBS oil
4 TBS shrimp paste in block form (also available as *belachan* or *blachan*, from Indonesian or Malaysian stores), diced
2 TBS dried shrimps
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium onion, chopped fine
1 green chili, seeded, minced (or add more, as desired)
1 tsp sesame oil
2 TBS fresh lime or lemon juice

In a wok or frying pan, heat oil at medium heat.
Add shrimp paste, stirring frequently and mashing the cubes into the oil.
Stir in shrimps, garlic, onions, and chili.
Fry until the onions and garlic are aromatic. Turn off heat.
Mix in sesame oil and citrus juice.
Adjust seasoning, adding more lime or lemon juice as desired.
Kept in a covered jar and topped with a covering of hot oil, this will keep for a week refrigerated.

Coconut Milk with Sago (Moh Let Saung)

Dessert is typically fresh fruit, or a sweet drink such as this. This is made of ingredients commonly available throughout the country: coconut milk, sago (the starch granules from palm trunks), and palm sugar.

1 cup sago pearls
4 cups water
½ cup palm sugar (jaggery available from Asian stores), chopped; or unrefined brown sugar
12 or more ice cubes, crushed roughly

Wash sago and soak for approximately l hour.
Drain and put in pot with 3 cups water.
Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and gently simmer until sago pearls are transparent (there may still be a white bit at the center, but this should disappear upon cooling).

(*continued*)

Allow to come to room temperature in the pot. When cold, drain and chill in the refrigerator.

Meanwhile, make the syrup. Place palm sugar in a small saucepan with remaining water and heat gently until dissolved.

Cool and strain.

For each serving, place 4 tablespoons of chilled sago into a tall glass. Add 3 tablespoons syrup (or according to taste) and mix well.

Add 2–3 ice cubes and fill glass with coconut milk.

Stir and serve immediately.

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MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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NAMIBIA

Namibia is a sparsely populated, largely desert country located in southern Africa, between South Africa and Angola. The climate is hot and the terrain is mostly desert-like plateau.

The population comprises the Ovambo ethnic group, Bushmen, and some Europeans, mainly Germans, descendants of colonizers in the late nineteenth century.

Most of the population are subsistence farmers, raising millet, sorghum, and livestock. Much food is imported as Namibia grows food insufficient to its needs. Fishing is done along the coast, though much of the Namibia coast is a protected nature reserve.

The Germans left some of their traces in the cuisine, but most of Namibian cooking centers on a staple of stiff porridge eaten with vegetable sauces.

Foodstuffs

- Staple is a stiff porridge called *oshifima*, made of maize or cassava.
- Beef and mutton are the favorite meats, though many people rarely get to eat meat.
- Vegetables: maize, cassava, millet, pumpkin, beans, wild vegetables, and nuts such as *mongongo*.
- Fruit: watermelon and melon, grapes, wild fruit.

Typical Dishes

- Stews of meat, or vegetables, or greens accompany most meals and are eaten with *oshifima*.
- South African foods such as rusks, melktarts, and the like can be found here, particularly in the capital city of Windhoek.
- Cakes and breads of German origin in the towns and some of the countryside.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day in the towns, two in poorer areas. Desert people such as the Bushmen eat one main meal during the day and subsist the rest of the time on snacks, sometimes eaten when food is collected.

- The traditional way of dining is to share a bowl of staple (*oshifima*) and a stew. Pieces of the porridge are torn off the mass in the bowl and formed with the fingers of the right hand into a small ball. This ball is dipped into the sauce and brought to the mouth.
- Drinks include beer, both commercial and home-brewed, tea, coffee, and, in the cities, soft drinks.

Stiff Porridge Staple (Oshifima)

This is the staple for most of Namibia's population. It is prepared either with cornmeal or with cassava, depending on the local produce. These two starches may also be mixed and cooked together.

1½ cups white cornmeal (white tortilla flour) or grated dried cassava (yucca or manioc) meal
2 cups water (or 1 cup water and 1 cup milk)

Heat water to boiling.
Gradually, in a steady stream, add ½ cup of the meal to the boiling liquid, whisking briskly and continuously.
When all the meal has been absorbed into the liquid, add another ½ cup in the same fashion, stirring constantly.
Repeat with remainder of meal.
Cook for 4 or 5 minutes stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
When mixture begins to pull away from the sides of the pot and stick together, remove from heat.
Place *oshifima* in a lightly greased bowl.
With damp or oiled hands, shape it into a smooth ball, turning it in the bowl to help smooth it. Serve immediately.
To eat in the traditional manner, tear off a piece of *oshifima* with your right hand and make an indentation in it with your thumb. Use this hollow to scoop up stew or sauce from a communal bowl.

Black-Eyed Peas (Oshingali)

This is a common side dish eaten with *oshifima*.

4 cups fresh or dried black-eyed peas
1 tsp salt
1 chili pepper, crushed, or ½ tsp cayenne pepper

Soak dried peas in boiling water for about 1 hour; fresh peas do not need soaking.
Rub peas between your palms to remove skins. Discard skins and drain water. (This step can be omitted.)

Place peas in a pot with water to barely cover. Add salt and chili.
Simmer until tender (15 minutes approximately, more if peas are older).
Serve, along with the cooking liquid, over *oshifima*.

Veldt Bread

The early European settlers developed this spicy substitute for the breads they were familiar with. This has become a national specialty. The *veldt* is the southern African name for the vast brushy plains that cover much of the landscape.

1 pound whole-grain flour
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
3 TBS brown sugar
½ tsp cinnamon powder
¼ tsp powdered cloves
¼ tsp allspice
3 TBS butter
¾ cup milk
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp butter

Preheat oven to 320°F.
Combine flour, baking powder, salt, sugar, and spices in a bowl.
Rub butter into the mix until it resembles coarse meal.
Combine milk and egg, and add to the flour mixture.
Mix together into a stiff dough, and knead in the bowl for 5 minutes. (The above steps can be done in a food processor.)
Turn out to a floured surface and knead for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Ease the dough into a buttered and floured large (about 5×10-inch) loaf pan.
Bake for 45 minutes. The finished loaf should sound hollow when tapped. If not, allow to bake for an additional 10 minutes, or until it tests done.
Turn onto a rack to cool.

NEPAL

Nepal is a mountainous kingdom between China and India. The south is flat tropical plains favoring rice cultivation while the northern regions by the Himalayas grow cold-resistant barley and buckwheat.

The largest ethnic group are Nepalese, with significant minorities of Ghurka, Sherpa, Maggar, and other ethnic groups, as well as immigrants from neighboring India and refugees from Tibet. Most Nepalese are Buddhists (the Buddha himself was born in what became modern Nepal) with indigenous beliefs; a minority are Hindus (and thus beef-abstaining) and Christians.

Nepalese food is heavily influenced by India, as seen in vegetable curries, and by Tibet.

Foodstuffs

- Staples (depending on region): rice (south), barley, buckwheat, corn, lentils; sweet potatoes in the high mountains.
- Chicken, turkey, pork, mutton, goat, water buffalo, dried meat.
- Eggplant, potato, sweet potato, pumpkin, white radish root and leaf, mustard greens, bamboo shoot, various gourds, tomato, legumes (pea, bean), cabbage, cauliflower; salted/fermented vegetables (*gundruk*).
- Banana, mango, papaya, jackfruit, watermelon, guava, custard apple, lychee.
- Yak dairy products such as yogurt, cheese, and milk.
- Seasonings: curry spices, green chili, cilantro, garlic bulb and leaf.

Typical Dishes

- National dish is *daal bhaat tarkaari*—boiled rice (*bhaat*) with thin lentil sauce (*daal*) and curried vegetables (*tarkaari*)—served with vegetable pickle (*achaar*).
- Indian-influenced spicy curries of vegetables or meat (mainly for wedding feasts and celebrations).
- Vegetable soups: sour pickled vegetables; bamboo shoots; bean sprouts.
- Chinese/Tibetan-style steamed or fried meat-filled dumplings (*momo*), noodles and vegetables (*thukpa*).
- Charcoal-grilled meats: fresh mutton, chicken, duck, buffalo, wild boar; or dried meat.

- Indian-style flat breads (*roti*) and vegetable-filled pastries (*samossa*).
- Indian-style milk-based sweets; flour- or semolina-based confections.
- Drinks: salty or sweet yogurt or buttermilk (*lassi*), Tibetan-style salty buttered milk tea, home-brewed wine and liquor from rice, millet, and other grains.

Styles of Eating

- Two main meals and snacks daily.
- Brunch, 7 to 10 a.m.: rice, lentil sauce, curried vegetables, pickle; salty buttered or milky tea. In non–rice-growing areas, buckwheat pancakes, eaten with radish pickle, or peanut butter and jam, and drunk with and dunked into salty buttered tea; barley and dried cheese in tea; potato pancakes with yak butter.
- Dinner, shortly after sunset, 6 to 7 p.m.: rice, lentil sauce, curried vegetables, pickle.
- Snacks: bread, dried cheese (*chhurpi*), lentil fritters, pounded rice (*chiura*) with yogurt, Indian-style flat breads, curried potatoes or other vegetables; drunk with buttered tea.

Mint Chutney (Babari Ko Achaar)

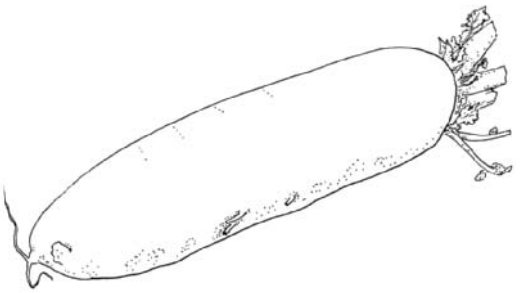
Achaar (also spelled *achar*) is a spicy table condiment eaten at most meals. Other vegetables used for chutney are unripe mango and tomatoes. This can be kept refrigerated for up to 1 week in a covered container. Serve at room temperature with fried and steamed snacks and all Nepalese dishes.

2 cups young fresh mint sprigs and leaves, washed and sorted, rotten or dry leaves discarded
1 fresh green chili (or to taste)
1 small red onion, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
1-inch piece fresh ginger root, peeled and chopped
2 TBS fresh lemon or lime juice
¼ cup plain yogurt (or 4 TBS water)
salt to taste

Place all the ingredients into a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
Once blended, transfer to a serving dish and serve.

Chicken Curry (Bhutuwa)

Beef is forbidden to Nepalese Hindus, and Buddhists are supposed to abstain from meat entirely. However, chicken, turkey, wild boar, goat (mutton), and buffalo are usually made into curries or stir-fries. Some meat is also dried. This is eaten with rice, lentil sauce, and vegetables for an evening meal.



WHITE RADISH

4 portions chicken breast (or 1 pound turkey or pork), cut into 1-inch pieces
5 TBS mustard oil (or other vegetable oil)
1 tsp turmeric
1 TBS cumin powder
3 fresh red chilies, minced
salt to taste
1 tsp ground black pepper
1 tsp fenugreek powder
5 cloves
5 garlic cloves, chopped fine
1-inch piece of fresh ginger, shredded or grated
1 cup spring onions, cut in 1-inch slices
¼ tsp cinnamon powder

Combine chicken, 1 tablespoon mustard oil, turmeric, cumin, chili, salt, and pepper. Toss well to coat thoroughly.
Heat 4 tablespoons mustard oil in a pan. Stir-fry fenugreek till it darkens, but avoid burning.
Add cloves and fry for 15 seconds.
Add chicken and brown pieces, turning several times initially to coat with spices.
Add garlic and ginger.
Stir-fry over medium heat until cooked. Add 1–2 tablespoons water if a bit dry.
Add spring onions and cinnamon, cook for 2 minutes, stirring.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve with curried vegetables and rice.

Black Lentil Fritters
(Bara, *also* Badha)

Lentils of all colors—red, green, black—are commonly eaten in thin soupy sauces or made into fritters. This dish is quite similar to another of black lentils, called *wo*, the difference being that these *bara* are shaped like flat doughnuts with a hole in the middle. They are eaten dipped into mint *achaar* for a snack, or as an additional dish to a main meal of rice and lentil sauce.

1 cup black or green lentils
1 TBS fresh grated ginger
¼ tsp asafetida (*hing*), (optional)
½ tsp cumin powder
salt to taste
oil for deep-frying

Soak black lentils in water overnight or until the black seed coating slips off easily.
Remove the coating by rinsing in water. Discard skins and water.
Place into a food processor or blender bowl and grind into a paste with just a minimum amount of water.
Add spices and salt to the ground lentils and mix well.
Heat enough oil for deep-frying over medium heat in a thick-bottomed pan.
Shape fritters into 3- to 4-inch diameter doughnuts with a hole in the middle.

Carefully lower into medium hot (350°F) oil and fry until golden brown on both sides.
Serve hot.

Chickpea-Flour Cookies (Besan Burfi)

Chickpeas are a common source of protein in Nepal. To make them into flour, the peas are split, roasted, and milled into a light yellow meal called *besan* or *gram* flour. The flour is often used for thickening stews or making sweet or savory pastries. These snacks are eaten in between meals and drunk with salty buttered tea.

1 cup ghee (clarified butter)
¼ tsp powdered cardamom
1 cup chickpea flour (available from Indian stores, also health food shops)
¼ cup powdered almonds or walnuts
1 cup sugar

Melt ghee over low heat in a wok; add cardamom and flour.
Stir-fry until flour is golden brown and fragrant. Stir in nuts. Remove from heat.
Stir in sugar and mix thoroughly.
Spread flour mixture in a small (about 8 × 8-inch) baking pan in a firm layer about ½-inch thick. Cool, then cut into diamond shapes.
Serve as a snack with tea.

Vegetable Noodles (Thukpa)

Besides *momo*, which are steamed meat-filled dumplings, another Tibetan-style dish popular in Nepal are noodles in a vegetable sauce.

1 pound egg noodles
2 TBS mustard oil (or other vegetable oil)
1 onion, chopped fine
1 tsp cumin powder
¼ tsp turmeric
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 fresh chilies (or to taste)
2 carrots, scraped and sliced into julienne strips (or substitute 3 cups frozen mixed vegetables for carrots, beans, and broccoli)
1 cup green beans, cut into 1-inch lengths
1 broccoli, separated into florets
1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
4 tsp soy sauce
½ cup yogurt
1 cup broth or stock (or ½ vegetable stock cube dissolved in 1 cup hot water)

(*continued*)

½ tsp *ajwain* (lovage seeds; or substitute celery seeds)
1 bay leaf
salt and pepper to taste
½ pound spinach, washed and cut into pieces, or frozen spinach, thawed
4 TBS chopped cilantro for garnish

Cook noodles in boiling salted water until just slightly undercooked (a bit more underdone than al dente as they will be cooked further). Drain and rinse.
In a saucepan or large wok over medium heat, heat mustard oil.
Add onion, fry until light brown.
Add cumin powder, turmeric, garlic, ginger, and chilies. Stir well for a minute or so.
Add carrots, beans, and broccoli (or mixed vegetables), and stir-fry for 5–6 minutes.
Add tomatoes, soy sauce, yogurt, broth, lovage seeds, bay leaf, salt, and pepper to the vegetables and cook until vegetables are tender but still crisp.
Add noodles and cook for 3 more minutes; add spinach, cook for 1 or 2 more minutes.
Garnish with cilantro.

Cheese Sweets (Peda)

Nepalese desserts are based on either milk or flour and show an Indian influence. This cheese sweet is a much-simplified version of a traditional offering to Hindu gods and is also a famous dessert. The original recipe calls for the whole milk to be boiled down until very thick, and would take over 2 hours. *Peda* or *dudh peda* are very rich and eaten with tea.

1 TBS ghee or butter
4 TBS sugar
1 tsp lemon juice
¼ tsp powdered cardamom (if not available, take seeds from whole green cardamoms and crush finely)
2 cups cream cheese, ricotta, or mascarpone, drained and blended in a food processor or blender until smooth
12 pistachio nuts, peeled to reveal green color, and halved

Put ghee or butter, sugar, lemon juice, and cardamom in a pan.
Heat at low heat until sugar is dissolved.
Stir in cream cheese, stirring continuously until thickened, for about 10 minutes.
Let cool.
Take small portions and roll into golf-ball-size balls.
Flatten the top slightly, and place on a serving dish.
Decorate each with half a pistachio.
Refrigerate and serve chilled.

THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is a western European country on the North Sea. The Dutch have traditionally lived near the sea, reclaiming parts to make more land for agriculture. The country is a flat lowland (hence its name which literally means "The Lowlands"; "Holland" belongs to the name of only two provinces). The country is cold in the winter and temperate in the summer. Dutch farmers grow a great variety of temperate vegetables and fruits under glass, and Dutch farming is world-renowned.

The population is predominantly of Dutch extraction with minorities of people originating from Morocco, Indonesia, Guyana, and other former Dutch colonies.

Dutch traditional cuisine tends to be bland, often smothered with gravy. However, contemporary cooking shows major influences from the former colonial empire: Indonesia, South America, and the Caribbean, including current possessions such as Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles.

Foodstuffs

- Consumption of dairy products is extremely high, which may account for the high average height of Dutch people. Butter, cream, cheese, and yogurts are consumed in many meals. The Dutch make and consume famous cheeses such as Gouda and Edam.
- Meat: beef is a favored meat, particularly veal. Chicken, duck, and pork are also preferred.
- Fish: one of the mainstays of Dutch cuisine is fish. Mussels and other seafood; eels are eaten.
- Vegetables: Dutch gardeners are famous throughout Europe, and luscious looking vegetables—cabbages, peppers, beans—are available everywhere.
- Fruit: wide variety of fruit available, including imports from tropical countries.

Typical Dishes

- A typical Dutch delicacy is raw fillets of herring, tail attached, garnished with chopped raw onions.
- *Rijstafel* has become a Dutch specialty, though based on a Dutch interpretation of the Indonesian table: many savory dishes eaten with rice.

- *Brodjes* (sandwiches) with a variety of fillings, including *haring* (fresh herring fillets and onions).
- *Pommes frites* (French fries) available from street barrows and served with mayonnaise.
- The Dutch have a sweet tooth, and eating sweets and cakes is common. *Poffertjes* (tiny pancakes) are served with whipped cream and candied ginger. Pancakes (often served with whipped cream and ginger in syrup) and hot chocolate to drink (the Dutch invented the chocolate bar) are very popular in cafes and at home.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and plenty of snacks.
- Table settings are European standard.
- Meals can be formal: washing hands before eating, being on time to the table, and starting to eat at the same moment as everyone else is important. It is impolite to begin eating before others. A parent or host often indicates when to eat, usually by saying "eet smakelijk" (pronounced ATE smahk-A-lick), which literally means "eat deliciously." One does not leave the table until everyone has finished eating.
- Breakfast: a variety of breads, cold cuts, cheeses, and butter; milky coffee.
- Other meals are light and often consist of bread, cold cuts, cheese, and salad.
- Dinner (around 6 p.m.) is the main meal for most people, but some rural families and older people retain the tradition of eating the main meal at midday.
- Coffee, cocoa, and milk are popular drinks. Beer is drunk along with wine during the evening meal.

Brussels Sprouts and Chestnuts
(Spruitjes met Kastanjes)

A vegetable appetizer is common for the main meal. This dish can be served with any meat dish or on its own.

1 pound raw or canned chestnuts
4 ounces seedless raisins, rinsed, soaked in boiling water to cover, and drained
2 pounds Brussels sprouts, limp outer leaves discarded
salt to taste
1 ounce butter, melted
¼ tsp nutmeg (freshly grated preferably)

Check chestnuts for quality by immersing in water. Discard those that float.
With the point of a sharp knife, cut a cross on the flat side of the chestnuts. Boil chestnuts for about 40 minutes in water to cover.
Drain and rinse. Peel off the hard shell and inner coating; cut in half. (A faster option is to buy canned peeled chestnuts and warm up.)
Place chestnuts in a large serving bowl. Stir in the raisins.

Boil the Brussels sprouts for about 10 minutes in salted water; drain and add to the chestnuts.
Combine the salt, butter, and nutmeg, and mix well with the nuts, raisins, and Brussels sprouts.

Green Pea Soup (Erwtensoep)

This thick soup, affectionately called "*snert,*" is well suited for the cold, damp Dutch winters. Presumably the same sort of soup is being enjoyed by the peasants in Breughel's famous paintings. A slice of (or even a whole) sausage can be added to make a complete meal for lunch or supper.

2½ cups dried green split peas
1 pork hock or 2 pounds spare ribs
2 bay leaves
1 TBS salt
½ tsp pepper
½ tsp marjoram
2 quarts water
2 leeks, white part only, chopped roughly
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 potato, peeled and cubed
1 cup celery leaves, finely chopped
1 tsp Maggi sauce (or substitute light soy sauce)
1 (about 1 pound) whole smoked sausage, cubed

Soak the dried peas overnight or at least 2 hours in cold water to cover, and drain.
In a large pot, bring the peas, pork, bay leaves, salt, pepper, marjoram, and water to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and gently simmer for 1½ to 2 hours.
Add leeks, celery, and potato to the soup and simmer for another ¾ hour until tender.
Remove bay leaves and pork hock or ribs, and slice meat into pieces. Add meat and celery leaves to soup. (If the soup gets too thick, you may add a bit more water, but this is meant to be a very thick soup.)
Simmer for another 20 minutes.
Adjust seasoning and add Maggi sauce and sausage.
Serve at once.

Meat Croquettes (Kroket)

Meat and potato croquets are one of the most common dishes for the main meal.

2 TBS butter
4 TBS flour
½ cup milk
½ cup chicken stock (or 1 cube chicken bouillon dissolved in ½ cup hot water)

(*continued*)

2 cups lean, cooked chicken or ground meat
½ tsp salt
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp chili powder
1 tsp curry powder
¼ tsp pepper
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp finely chopped parsley
1 egg, beaten
2 TBS water
½ cup flour seasoned with a pinch of salt and ¼ tsp pepper or nutmeg
1½ cups fine bread crumbs
oil for deep-frying

Heat butter in a saucepan. Add flour and cook over low heat, stirring constantly until light golden.
Stir in only a little bit of milk at a time, alternating with the chicken stock, adding more only when the previous bit has been thoroughly absorbed. (The objective is to make a very thick white sauce.)
Add the chicken, seasonings, Worcestershire sauce, and parsley, stirring constantly.
Remove from heat and cool.
Shape into cylinders 1¼ inches thick and 3½ inches long. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes (for ease of handling).
Combine the egg with 1–2 tablespoons water.
Coat the cylinders with seasoned flour, then dip into the egg mixture, and finally coat with bread crumbs. Chill again for at least 30 minutes.
Heat oil in a deep frying pan to moderate heat.
Fry the croquettes, a few at a time so as not to lower the oil temperature, to a golden brown.

Chocolate Hail (Hagelslag)

Considering that the Dutch invented eating chocolate, it is not surprising to find it turning up on a sandwich. *Hagelslag* is a typical Dutch sandwich topping.

The Dutch eat about 30 million pounds of it per year on about 850 million slices of bread.

8 slices of bread
¼ cup or 8 pats butter
8 TBS milk chocolate sprinkles

Butter each bread slice lightly.
Sprinkle 1 tablespoon chocolate sprinkles evenly on top.
Eat as a snack or as a light meal with milk.

Beans with Apples and Pork
(Bruine Bonen met Appels en Spek)

Beans and pork are typical common foods enlivened by apples. Serve as a main dish.

- 1 pound dried or 2 pounds canned brown or navy beans
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 Granny Smith or other firm tart apples, peeled, cored, and sliced into rings
- ¾ pound fresh boneless fatty pork or bacon strips, diced
- salt, pepper, and cinnamon to taste
- 2 TBS oil
- 2 large onions, diced
- 5 ounces molasses (substitute dark corn syrup or honey)
- crusty whole-grain, rye, or other brown bread

Soak the beans overnight in water to cover. (Omit the next two steps if using canned beans.)

Drain, and bring to a boil the beans and fresh water to cover. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour.

Rub the pork with salt, pepper, and cinnamon (if using bacon, omit the salt). Dry fry slowly in a hot skillet until the fat runs. Remove from pan and reserve.

In the fat rendered from the pork or bacon (add up to 2 tablespoons oil if not enough to cover the bottom of the skillet) sauté the onions until golden brown.

About 5 minutes before the beans are ready, add the apple rings. (If using canned beans, warm the beans and apples together in a saucepan until heated through.)

Distribute the beans and apples into soup bowls (with just a bit of the cooking liquid). Top with pork and onions.

Serve the molasses on the side for diners to help themselves. Eat with thick slices of hearty bread.

Speculaas

These special, decorated cookies are traditionally eaten, and given, during the Feast of St. Nicholas (the original Santa Claus), on December 5–6.

- 4 cups flour
- 2 cups butter
- 1½ cups brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp cloves
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ tsp ginger
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- about ¼ cup milk
- ½ cup blanched slivered almonds
- ½ cup candied fruit peel
- butter for greasing

(*continued*)

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a mixer or food processor, mix together the first 10 ingredients (i.e., all except the milk, almonds, and fruit peel).
Add only enough milk to the mixture to make a stiff dough. Place in a plastic food bag and refrigerate for 1 hour.
Divide dough into two portions. Shape the rolls into cylinders about 12 inches long and 2 inches in diameter. Place in food bags and refrigerate for 1 hour.
On a lightly floured surface, slice the dough cylinders into rounds ¼-inch thick.
Press the almonds and candied peel on top in decorative patterns.
Place on buttered cookie sheets. Bake at 350°F for 15 minutes, or until light golden.

Custard Pudding (Vla)

This is the most common dessert, and it comes in many different flavors. Serve hot or cold, with berries, fruit slices, chopped nuts, or drizzled with chocolate syrup.

1 quart milk (for a richer *vla*, use half-and-half)
2 ounces cornstarch
3 ounces sugar

In a saucepan, scald the milk and remove from heat.
In a bowl, mix the cornstarch with the sugar and 4 tablespoons of the scalded milk until smooth. (Make sure there are no lumps.)
Add the cornstarch mixture to the milk in the saucepan, constantly stirring.
Return the saucepan to low heat, and allow to simmer for 3 minutes, whisking occasionally.
Remove from heat.
Keep whisking every 5 minutes until the *vla* is lukewarm.

Vanilla Flavor

Add 1 tsp vanilla extract to the cornstarch mix.

Chocolate Flavor

Melt 4–6 cubes cooking chocolate in the hot milk before adding the cornstarch mix.

Caramel Flavor

Heat 5 ounces sugar in a small pan until golden brown. (Do not use the 3 ounces sugar of the basic recipe.)

Remove from heat, add 2 tablespoons cold water, then add to the hot milk. Stir until the caramel is dissolved.

Coffee Flavor

Mix 1 teaspoon instant coffee powder into the cornstarch mixture.

NEW CALEDONIA

New Caledonia comprises a French administrative region of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, east of Australia. The climate is tropical. Much of the islands are covered by jungle or tropical growth.

The population is largely composed of Melanesians (about 40 percent) and Europeans (slightly less), with Polynesian, Indonesian, and other minorities.

The cuisine is mainly southern Pacific–oriented, with staples such as taro, breadfruit, bananas, and particularly coconut. A strong French influence is also reflected in the cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Yams, sweet potato, breadfruit, taro are the traditional starches. Potatoes and rice have been added in modern times.
- Meat: pork and chicken predominate.
- Fish and seafood: along the coastal areas, fish and seafood (clams, crustaceans) are an important element of diet.
- Fruit: coconut is of greatest importance, pineapple, bananas, papaya, guava.

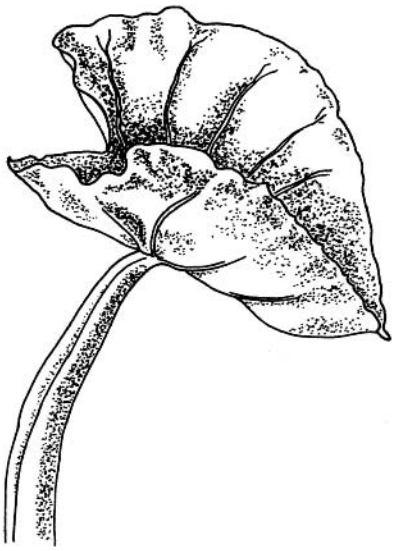
Typical Dishes

- Breadfruit cooked with fish; breadfruit fritters.
- Papaya fish soup.
- Boiled yams.

Styles of Eating

- Traditional families would eat one meal a day. Any meal without the traditional staple was considered a snack. In some of the local societies, men ate apart in a special men's house, where they spent most of their time. Most people ate bits of fruit and vegetables and roasted meat in the forest whenever they could.
- Modern dining practices are heavily affected by French custom. Families eat together using European table settings and course order. People in the towns follow European traditions of three meals a day and snacks.

- Table settings in Westernized households are European standard.
- Breakfast: traditional—boiled breadfruit, yam, cassava, or taro with coconut milk; urban/contemporary—bread or a roll, jam, milky coffee.
- Lunch: traditional, usually eaten in mid- to late afternoon—fish; yam, breadfruit, taro root or other staple; greens such as taro or squash leaves; fruit. Urban/contemporary—eaten around noon, may be a light meal, perhaps Western style, a sandwich or pasta, salad.
- Dinner: traditional (customarily not eaten); urban/contemporary may be heavier than lunch, usually includes fish or meat, starch, salad, and fruit or other dessert.
- Drinks: coconut juice and fresh fruit juice; contemporary—bottled juice and soda drinks.



TARO LEAF

Prawns in Coconut Milk
(Crevettes en Coco)

Traditionally, this is made with crayfish, and would be baked in an earth oven and served in the half-shells of the coconuts from which the cream is extracted. In the absence of coconut halves, use small ovenproof individual pots or bowls.

1 pound prawns or large shrimp (unpeeled is best, but shelled prawns can do)
3 cups boiling water
1 green papaya
2 cups coconut milk
salt to taste
aluminum foil or banana leaves and kitchen string for wrapping

Plunge prawns into boiling water for 3 minutes (depending on size: do not overcook). Strain and reserve cooking water. Shell and remove heads from prawns. Chop flesh.
Mix coconut milk with 1 cup water from cooking the prawns.
Cut papaya in half. Peel and seed, retaining seeds. Cut flesh into small pieces and rinse.
Crush seeds in mortar or blender.
Mix papaya, prawns, and coconut milk mixture. Season with papaya seeds and salt.
Divide into individual pots, or half-coconut shells if available.
Wrap each pot in foil (or with banana leaf and kitchen string).
Bake for 1 hour in an earth oven (or about 30 minutes in a regular oven at 350°F) and serve.
Diners unwrap the pots at the table.

Pineapple Fishballs

This is served as a side dish with the staple for lunch or dinner.

1½ pounds fish meat (any firm fish), chopped or minced
½ cup plus 1 TBS cornstarch
oil for deep frying
1 small onion, chopped
1 small unripe papaya, peeled, seeded, and cut into strips
½ cup pineapple, cut into small chunks
1 small head Chinese cabbage, chopped into strips
2 TBS soy sauce
½ cup water
½ inch fresh ginger, grated

Mix the fish with ½ cup cornstarch and shape into walnut-sized balls.
Heat enough oil for deep-frying in a wok.
Fry the fish balls a few at a time until golden. Remove, drain, and reserve.
Pour out all the oil from the wok, leaving just 2 TBS.
Heat the 2 tablespoons oil and stir-fry onions until translucent.
Add the papaya and pineapple, and stir-fry for 5 minutes.
Add the cabbage, first the thicker (stalk) pieces; after 2–3 minutes, add the leaves.
Stir-fry for 2 minutes.
Mix soy sauce, water, the remaining cornstarch, and ginger.
Add cornstarch mix to the vegetables, stirring constantly until vegetables are well coated and liquid is bubbling.
Add fish balls and stir gently. Remove from heat.
Serve at once with cooked taro, yams, breadfruit, or rice.

Breadfruit and Fish

This dish combines locally available items and is served on its own at midday, or as part of a multicourse dinner.

2 cups breadfruit (substitute taro root or cassava), peeled and cubed
1 cup cooked fresh fish (or canned tuna)
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
2 cups prepared mixed salad vegetables of your choice (lettuce, carrots, bell peppers, tomatoes, watercress)
½ cup lime juice
salt, pepper to taste

Cook breadfruit in boiling water until soft but not mushy, about 15 minutes (or bake, wrapped in foil, in a moderate oven for 15–20 minutes.).
Combine with the remaining ingredients.
Drizzle with lime juice, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss together gently.

Papaya Fish Soup

This is a commonly made side dish for lunch or dinner.

1 pound whole fish, scaled, gutted, and cut into large pieces
salt, pepper to taste
4 cups water
2 cups green papaya, coarsely grated
1 TBS soy sauce
1 cup coconut milk

In a pot, bring the fish, salt, pepper, and water to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes.
Remove fish, allow to cool for 10 minutes, and remove bones (and skin, if desired).
Return fish flesh to stock.
Add grated papaya and soy sauce, then simmer until tender (about 10 minutes).
Add coconut milk.
Adjust seasoning and simmer until coconut milk is heated through.
Remove from heat and serve at once.

Breadfruit and Beef

This is a one-dish meal, often served for lunch or dinner.

½ cup flour
salt to taste
1 pound beef, cut into 1-inch cubes
3 TBS cooking oil
1 large onion, chopped
water as needed
1 cup dried breadfruit, soaked in cold water for 10 minutes, or fresh (substitute taro or cassava), diced
1 cup squash, diced
2 cups young taro leaves (tough ribs removed, shredded) or other green leafy vegetable such as spinach or Chinese cabbage

Season the flour with salt and sprinkle over the meat.
Heat oil in a wok and brown the meat quickly on all sides.
Add onion and stir-fry until golden.
Add water to barely cover. Cover and simmer until meat is tender (20–30 minutes).
Add breadfruit, squash, and taro leaves.
Cook for 15–20 minutes until vegetables are tender. Taste and adjust seasoning.
(If using spinach or Chinese cabbage, add them now; cook for 2–3 minutes, then turn off heat.)
Serve hot.

Stuffed Papaya

This dish, like all stuffed dishes, involves a bit of effort, but the result is worth it. It may be served for lunch or dinner, accompanied by boiled taro, yam, or cassava roots.

1 medium half-ripe papaya
3 TBS oil
1 small onion, chopped fine
¾ cup cooked ground meat
¾ cup cooked rice
1 egg, beaten
salt to taste

Cut out the stalk end of the papaya to expose the cavity. Scoop out the papaya seeds with a spoon. Crush or blend seeds in a blender and reserve.
Sprinkle salt into the papaya "cylinder"; set aside with the stalk end until needed.
Heat 1 tablespoon oil and sauté the onion until golden. Remove from heat.
In a bowl, mix thoroughly the onion, meat, rice, egg, and salt. Stir in ground papaya seeds to taste.
Stuff the mixture into the papaya. Attach the stalk end with toothpicks or bamboo skewers.
Brush the papaya with oil. Bake in an earth oven (or in a 350°F oven until papaya is soft, for about 30–60 minutes, depending on the size of the fruit). Let the papaya rest for 10–15 minutes before serving.
To serve, cut crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices.

Boiled Yam

This is a common breakfast dish popular all over the island, particularly in the interior.

2 pounds yams (true yams (*Dioscorea* species, available from Asian or Hispanic stores, not sweet potatoes), peeled and cubed
2 cups coconut milk
pinch salt
½ pound taro leaves (substitute spinach, cabbage, or Chinese cabbage)
sugar to taste

Place yams and salt in a covered saucepan.
Fill the pot with coconut milk to barely cover (if needed, add some water).
Place the taro leaves in one layer over the yams.
Cover and simmer for 30–45 minutes over low flame until yams are tender.
Serve hot. Pass the sugar for diners to add at the table, if they wish.

Breadfruit Fritters

These are eaten as a side dish or snack.

1 cup cooked (boiled or baked) mature breadfruit, mashed to a paste
1 egg, beaten
¼ cup milk powder
1 TBS onion, finely chopped
salt to taste
2 TBS (or more) water
oil for deep-frying

Mix thoroughly the breadfruit, egg, milk powder, onion, and salt.
Add just enough water to make a thick batter.
In a deep frying pan, heat the oil to moderate heat.
Drop tablespoonfuls of the batter without crowding the pan.
Fry until golden brown on both sides.
Serve hot.

Guava Pies (Boulettes de Goyave)

This elaborate confection is served for dessert or as a snack.

8 ripe but firm guavas (red or white or a mixture), medium-sized (about 2 to 2½ inches in diameter)
juice of 1 lime
2 TBS butter, melted
1 cup sugar
1 tsp cinnamon powder
2 cups flour
½ tsp baking powder
1 TBS sugar
¼ tsp salt
¾ cup butter
¼–⅓ cup ice water
water or beaten egg white for sealing pastry

Wash and trim the guavas and cut in half crosswise.
With a teaspoon or grapefruit spoon, carefully scoop out the pulp and seeds, leaving the walls of the guava halves intact (don't worry if some tear).
Mash the pulp and seeds, then pass through a sieve. Discard the seeds.
Mix the pulp with lime juice, melted butter, sugar, and cinnamon. Set aside.
Sift flour with baking powder, sugar, and salt.
Rub butter into flour until mixture resembles coarse meal. Gradually add just enough water to make a firm dough.
Divide the dough into 4 portions.
On a floured surface, roll each portion into a 6-inch square.
Place 1 guava half, cut side up, in the center of the pastry square. Fill the hollow with 1 tablespoon of the guava mixture and sprinkle with cinnamon.
Top with another guava half, also hollow side up, and fill with guava mixture as well.

(*continued*)

Moisten the edges of the pastry with water or egg white.
Bring two opposite corners up over the fruit, overlapping and pressing together. Bring up the other two corners in the same way.
Firmly pinch the open edges to seal. Prick the pastry with a fork once or twice.
Place in a buttered muffin pan.
Bake in a preheated 425°F oven for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°F and bake for about 15 more minutes, or until pies are golden.
Transfer to a cake rack to cool to lukewarm.
Serve plain or with coconut milk, if desired.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand comprises two large islands southeast of Australia. The islands are volcanic, with wide fertile valleys. The climate is temperate to cold, and icy in the mountains. New Zealand farmers are known worldwide for their innovative crops. In addition to grains, vegetables, and fruit (some consumed locally, some for export), sheep are raised, which outnumber humans about 4 to 1.

The population is composed of Maoris—Polynesians who settled the islands in the sixth to eighth centuries—and Europeans, largely British settlers who arrived beginning in the nineteenth century.

Maori culture has enriched New Zealand cooking substantially. The Maori use the Polynesian earth oven for cooking on festive occasions, and this has entered the non-Maori cooking as well. In addition, they have introduced other New Zealanders to numerous forms of seafood, some of them unique to the islands.

Foodstuffs

- There is no standard staple: wheat products, rice, potatoes are consumed according to choice.
- Mutton is a common meat. Also beef, chicken, duck, and venison.
- Fish and seafood: a large variety of fish unique to southern waters; exceptional seafood, including varieties of clams, mussels, and sea urchins.
- Vegetables: potatoes, sweet potatoes (*kumara*), pumpkin, carrots, peas and beans, cabbages, tomatoes, wild greens.
- Fruit: wide variety of fruit, including the world-famous kiwifruit, grapes, orchard fruit, berries of various kinds.
- Dairy: a large dairy industry provides butter, cream, milk, and other dairy products used for direct consumption and cooking.

Typical Dishes

- Baked, grilled, or stewed mutton and lamb.
- Vegetable and meat soups start many meals.
- Hamburgers, steaks, and other grilled meats are eaten at home or outside.
- Traditional *hangi* (earth oven–cooked) foods from the Maori tradition, on special occasions, include meat, fish, starches, and vegetables (see box "Polynesian Earth Oven").

- New Zealanders have a sweet tooth, and have developed a number of desserts and cakes (whose origin they often dispute with their Australian neighbors).
- Tea with milk, coffee, soft drinks, and fruit juices are commonly served with meals or in between times. Beer is also a common drink.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- With the exception of traditional dining among Maori (and some Polynesian immigrants), dining styles are British.
- Breakfast can be substantial: eggs, meat, potatoes, and bread.
- Lunch and dinner can be substantial affairs of meat, carbohydrates, and cooked vegetables. These are usually served in courses with an appetizer, soup, meat and vegetable dish, and a dessert.

POLYNESIAN EARTH OVEN (UMU, HANGI)

Cooking in an earth oven is probably one of the earliest cooking forms known to humankind. It uses a relatively small amount of fuel to cook a relatively large amount of food, most nutrients are well preserved, the technology needed is simple, and it is a social activity that all can participate in. In Oceania, this form of cooking has been retained as a central cooking method long after it disappeared in most other areas. (Some places that have retained this form of cooking for *festive* occasions are Peru [the Amerindian *pachamanca*], Oman [the *shuwa* or *tanour*, a community feast at the end of Ramadan], and the United States of America [clambake]). This is due partly to the lack of alternatives (ceramics, metals, and glass were not available) and partly to the social and symbolic importance it was given. Earth oven cooking is retained in all Oceanian areas in one form or another.

A pit is dug into the earth. A fire is lit, and when it is burning well, large stones (ranging from the size of two fists to about coconut size) are piled on the burning fuel. When the fire dies down (after 2 hours or so), a layer of some damp material (traditionally, large, soaked leaves) are laid on the stones and packets of food, wrapped securely in leaves, are laid on top. Another layer of leaves follows, and the pit is then covered by earth and sealed well.

The pit is opened after 4–6 hours, depending on the size and amount of food.

In most societies in Oceania, the food is not strongly flavored, and a variety of foods—fish, meat, seafood, taro, yams, bananas, etc.—are placed to cook in the earth oven.

In modern versions, the leaf layer has been replaced by well-soaked, clean hessian sacking, and the food parcels are often placed in metal mesh baskets for convenience. It is important that there be plenty of steam, that the steam be able to circulate, and that it be well sealed inside the earth; else, the food will not cook.

Stones also have to be chosen carefully so they do not crack. Volcanic rocks are preferred. It is also important that the burn be *under* the rocks, otherwise they will not heat properly: rocks embedded in ash are more likely to be insulated from the fire.

Placing the food in the correct order is crucial as everything will be cooking at the same time:

Large meat chunks are placed at the bottom.
Smaller fish and fowl and root vegetables (sweet potatoes, yams, and, more recently, potatoes) above that.
Puddings and fruit in the upper layers.

Asparagus Soup

The similarities of climate meant that the early British settlers brought with them many of their favorite foods. Soup is often served as an appetizer.

1 pound asparagus, washed, tender tips cut off and reserved
4 cups milk
2 TBS butter
2 TBS flour
1 tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper

Boil the asparagus stalks in plenty of water until tender. Remove and reserve.
Add tips to the same water and boil until tender. Remove from heat and drain. Reserve.
Mash (or puree in a food processor) the stalks with a few tablespoons milk. Pass through a sieve and reserve.
Make a white sauce: in a saucepan, melt the butter. Stir in the flour until completely absorbed.
Add the milk a little at a time, whisking constantly to prevent lumps, until the mixture is creamy. Add the rest of the milk, whisking well until smooth.
Stir in the sieved asparagus. Season with salt and pepper, and bring to a boil.
Simmer for 5 minutes. Add the tips and serve as a first course.

Baked Fish Steaks

Fish play an important part in the diet, often served as a main dish for lunch or dinner.

4 (weighing about ½ pound each) fish steaks (grouper, jack, or salmon)
½ cup milk
1 cup dry bread crumbs
2 ounces butter
salt and pepper to taste

Place fish in one layer in a covered container or tray.
Pour milk over the fish. Leave to marinate for 1 hour.
Drain and discard milk.
Season the fish with salt and pepper, then sprinkle fish with bread crumbs.
Lay fish in a buttered large (about 10 × 13-inch) baking dish.
Melt remaining butter and pour over fish.
Bake in a 350°F oven for 25–30 minutes, or until fish flakes easily. Do not overcook.
Serve with mashed potatoes or rice.

White Fish Fritters

This is served as an appetizer or as a main dish for a light meal.

1 cup flour
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
1 egg, well beaten
½ cup very cold milk
1½ pounds firm white fish fillet, cut in thin strips
oil for deep-frying
lemon wedges for garnish

Combine flour, baking powder, and salt.
Mix well with the egg and sufficient milk to make a smooth batter.
In a deep frying pan, heat about one-half inch of oil to moderate heat.
Dip pieces of fish in batter and deep fry a few pieces at a time until golden on both sides.
Drain on paper towels and serve with lemon wedges and mashed potatoes.

Sea Urchin (Kina) *Pie*

Kina, a variety of sea urchin, were an important food source for the Maori. These are 3-inch spiny balls. The roe (the edible part) is found in five "fingers" within the fragile shell. It is gathered at low tide, or by divers, and has a sweet, fresh sea taste.

2 cups fresh *kina* (or substitute equivalent preserved sea urchin roe, often available at Japanese stores)
1 cup bread crumbs
2 strips bacon, chopped

Place alternate layers of *kina* and bread crumbs into a buttered ovenproof dish, finishing with a layer of bread crumbs.
Cover with chopped bacon.
Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes until crumbs and bacon are crisp.

Meat Loaf

This is a traditional main dish for midday or evening meals, served with baked potatoes and salad.

1 pound lean ground meat (beef preferred)
½ cup rolled oats
1 large egg
1 tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground pepper

1 tsp ground allspice
1 tsp dried marjoram, crushed
½ tsp grated nutmeg
3 TBS tomato sauce
1 medium onion, chopped fine
butter for greasing

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Combine all ingredients and mix well.
Place in a buttered 4 × 10-inch loaf pan, smoothing the surface.
Bake for 1 hour, or until done.
Let stand for about 10 minutes to allow the meat and juices to settle before serving.
Cut in thick slices. Serve the juices in a sauce boat or bowl to pass around at the table.

Ginger Beer

This drink was popularized by English settlers, though it probably originated in either Africa or the Caribbean.

½ tsp sugar
2 TBS warm water
¼ tsp dried yeast
3 pints water
rind of 2 lemons, grated
1 cup sugar
juice of 2 lemons
1 TBS dried ginger powder or 2-inch piece of fresh ginger, grated

In a bowl, dissolve sugar in warm water. Add yeast and stir.
Set in a warm place until frothy, about 10 minutes.
Boil 1 cup water and add the rind, 1 cup sugar, and ginger.
Allow to soak for 10 minutes.
Strain into a 2-quart bottle or jug. Add the remaining water, yeast mixture, and lemon juice.
Chill, lightly covered, overnight in the refrigerator.
Serve cold.

Banana Sandwiches

This is a common snack or even a small meal popular in many households.

8 slices fresh bread (whole meal or white)
¼ cup butter
4 ripe bananas, sliced into thin disks or ovals

Spread butter on bread slices.
Lay banana slices on one buttered slice.

(*continued*)

Cover with the other slice.
Eat with tea, milk, or ginger beer.

ANZAC Biscuits

ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. It is not quite clear whether the first ANZAC biscuits were baked in World War I or World War II to be sent to soldiers at the front. As in the case of *pavlova* (see "Australia"), controversy exists as to whether these were invented in Australia or New Zealand. Without the coconut, these are quite similar in taste to the English bar cookies called flapjacks.

1 cup flour
1 cup rolled oats
¼ cup desiccated coconut
½ cup brown sugar
½ tsp baking powder
½ cup butter
2 TBS golden syrup (substitute corn syrup)

Preheat oven to 300°F.
Combine flour, oats, coconut, sugar, and baking powder.
Melt butter and add golden syrup.
Stir over low heat until syrup has melted.
Add butter mixture to dry ingredients, mixing until smooth.
Roll mixture into about 30–35 golf-ball-sized balls.
Place on greased baking tray and flatten slightly.
Bake for about 15 minutes, or until nicely browned.

Kiwi Cream

In New Zealand, kiwifruit are known as Chinese gooseberries. The fruit is originally from China, where it grows in the wild. New Zealand farmers developed the larger eating varieties familiar today and, as a marketing gimmick, labeled them "kiwi fruit," inasmuch as New Zealanders are often known by the name of that rare bird.

2 eggs, separated
⅛ tsp salt
1 TBS cornstarch
½ tsp vanilla extract
1 cup milk, scalded
3 ounces sugar
1 cup kiwifruit pulp (heated for 1–2 minutes to avoid curdling cream and milk)
½ cup sweet cream, whipped

Beat egg yolks to until light and lemon-colored.
Add salt, cornstarch, and vanilla.
Stir in milk gradually, while cooking over (not in) boiling water in a double boiler until mixture thickens.
Stir in half the sugar.
Remove from heat and allow to cool.
Beat egg whites to soft peaks. Add the remaining sugar gradually while beating, and continue to beat until stiff.
Mix the cooled yolk mixture and kiwifruit pulp.
Lightly but thoroughly fold in the egg whites and whipped cream.
Spoon the mixture into a serving bowl and chill for 4 hours or overnight.
Serve cold.

NICARAGUA

The largest country in Central America, Nicaragua was a Spanish colony for three centuries. The Caribbean coast was briefly occupied by Britain, but Nicaragua became independent in 1821. Nicaragua's tropical lowlands and cooler highlands are ideal for raising coffee, bananas, sugarcane, as well as livestock.

Spanish culture and language are predominant among the mixed European-Amerindians, who make up about 90 percent of the population. There is also a minority of Miskito Amerindians, Garifuna (mixed Afro-Caribbean), and English-speaking Creoles. Nicaraguan cuisine reflects this mix of cultures and history.

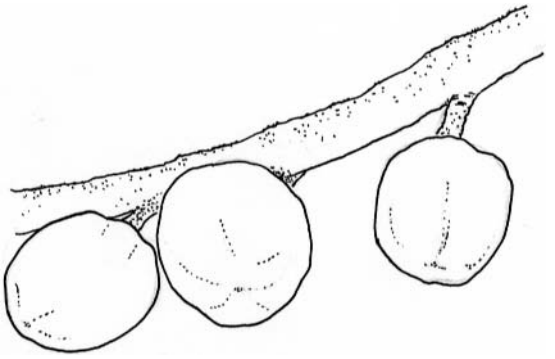
Foodstuffs

- Staples: corn, rice, beans, plantain. Corn is versatile, as a flour for flat bread, as a vegetable, and as a cold drink.
- Chicken, pork, beef, fish, white cheese and sour cream, pork/beef internal organs, turtle eggs.
- Cabbage, zucchini (*pipian*), baby corn, taro (*quequisque*), cassava, pumpkin, squash, bell pepper.
- Mango, pineapple, Spanish plum (*jocote*), citrus.
- Seasoning: bitter orange, mint, achiote (*annatto*, *Bixa orellana*), oregano, cilantro.

Typical Dishes

- Rice and beans (*gallo pinto*) is the national dish.
- *Nacatamal*—a steamed dumpling of corn, pork, rice, potato, onion, tomato, and green pepper—for weekends or festive occasions such as parties.
- *Fritanga*, an assembly of rice and beans (*gallo pinto*) with various accompanying dishes: charbroiled beef; a cabbage, tomato, and onion salad dressed with vinegar (made from bananas); fried green plantain (*tajadas*) or fried ripe plantain (*maduros fritos*); pork sausage; boiled cassava; white cheese or blood pudding (*moronga*). Sliced green onions or fresh cilantro are also common accompaniments.

- *Vigorón*: a dish of boiled cassava with crisp pork rind, topped with cabbage salad.
- On the Caribbean coast: turtle meat or fish and pork with vegetables (*rondon*, from the Caribbean English "rundown"); rice and beans cooked in coconut oil.
- Substantial soups and stews of meat with vegetables.
- *Yoltamal*: a tender corn tamale mixed with milk and cheese, wrapped in cornhusks.
- Snacks: *rosquillas* (cheese and corn biscuits); soft white cheese in a corn tortilla, topped with sour cream and pickled onions; fried plantains with a piece of cheese.
- Sweets: corn and cheese cake (*perrerreque*); corn crackers with cinnamon-sugar topping (*viejitas*); three-milk cake (*tres leches*); sweet corn and cheese cake soaked in rum and cinnamon (*pio quinto*).
- Drinks: fresh fruit juice juices from cooked cereal (*horchata*).



SPANISH PLUM

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: usually at 6 or 7 a.m.; *gallo pinto*, fried plantain, tortilla, coffee.
- Lunch: the main meal of the day, eaten between 12 and 2 p.m., often followed by a siesta. Rural families eat lunch together, but many urban families do not. Rice and beans, tortillas, meat or chicken, fresh fruit.
- Supper: usually between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.; a light meal, usually rice and beans, soup or stew, fresh fruit.
- Snacks: eaten at mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

Bean Soup (Sopa de Frijoles)

Beans with rice are the mainstay of the daily diet, being eaten at least once a day, if not more. Many people have rice and beans at every meal. Beans are also pureed as a sauce or served as a soup made with sour cream and eggs. This soup is usually eaten with rice and tortillas and fried plantain.

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
1 cup green onions, chopped (reserve ¼ cup for garnish)
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 12-ounce can kidney beans or black beans, drained
4 cups chicken or beef broth
1½ cups sour cream or buttermilk (reserve ½ cup for garnish)
1 tsp vinegar (optional)
salt and pepper to taste
2 eggs, beaten

(*continued*)

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in the onions and garlic and cook until softened.
Stir in the rest of the vegetables, beans, and broth.
Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the peppers are tender.
Stir in the sour cream and add salt, pepper, and vinegar (if using).
Stir in the beaten eggs.
When the eggs are done, turn off the heat.
Garnish with green onions and a spoonful of sour cream. Hand out the rest of the sour cream for diners to add at the table.

Young Corn and Cheese Dumplings (Yoltamales)

These corn and cheese dumplings are eagerly anticipated for a snack or an appetizer during the corn-growing season, as they are made of young, sweet, and tender ears. *Yoltamales* are also delicious made with more easily available frozen sweet corn kernels. Nicaraguan white cheese has no real American counterpart, but ricotta or cream cheese is a passable substitute. Even if you are using foil for ease of wrapping, if you have access to fresh cornhusks, lay one or two inside the foil to impart an authentic flavor and scent.

10 young, fresh ears of corn with husks (or 2 cups frozen sweet corn kernels, thawed and drained thoroughly)
1 pound fresh white cheese (ricotta or cream cheese, or a mixture of both)
½ cup sugar
salt
⅛–½ cup milk
aluminum foil, 8 pieces, each measuring 6 × 6 inches (if fresh cornhusks are not available)

If using fresh corn, remove the husks carefully, taking care not to tear them, as they will be used for wrapping the dumplings.
Wash and dry the husks thoroughly. Set aside.
Scrape the kernels off the ears.
In a blender or food processor, blend together the corn kernels, cheese, salt, sugar, and ⅛ cup milk to a thick mixture. If the mixture is too thick, add a bit more milk, but do not let it get watery.
For each *yoltamal*, take 2 (or more, if necessary) whole, wide pieces of cornhusks to form a cross.
At the center of the crossed husks, place ½ cup of the corn-cheese mixture.
Fold over two opposite sides. Fold the remaining opposite sides over the previously folded ones. Form a neat and secure parcel. Fasten the ends with toothpicks.
Repeat with the rest of the mixture.
(Alternatively, use foil for wrapping: bring two opposite sides together and fold over the filling to seal the opening within the fold. Do the same for the two remaining sides. Repeat until all the mixture is wrapped.)

In a large covered saucepan or steamer, bring to a boil about 4 cups of water. (The boiling water must not reach the dumplings.)
Put leftover husks (if using) at the bottom of a grid or the inner pan of the steamer.
Place the wrapped dumplings over the husks or at the bottom of the inner steamer pan.
Let steam for 1 hour, adding more boiling water if necessary. Turn off the heat.
Let the dumplings cool in the pan.
Take out and serve.

Grilled Steak (Carne Asada)

Roast meat or chicken is a popular accompaniment to the daily staple of rice and beans, particularly in the national dish, *fritanga*.

¼ cup oil
1 onion, sliced into thin rings
1 cup juice of bitter oranges, or a mix of orange and lime juice
1 tsp cumin (optional)
1 TBS fresh cilantro (optional)
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
salt to taste
4 steaks, beef round or London broil (substitute pork, turkey, or chicken breast)

In a stainless steel or glass bowl, mix the oil, onion, citrus juice, cumin, cilantro (if using), salt, and pepper.
Add meat; cover and marinate for 2 hours or overnight, refrigerated.
Prepare an outdoor grill, preferably with mesquite charcoal.
Take the meat from the marinade and grill over hot coals until well browned, for about 5–7 minutes. (Alternatively, pan-fry in a hot skillet to the desired degree of doneness.)
Turn the meat over and grill on the other side until cooked as desired.
Slice meat into thin strips across the grain.
Serve alongside rice and beans.

Pineapple and Rice Drink (Horchata con Piña)

This drink is just one of many interesting Nicaraguan creations combining cereals and readily available fruits. Other typical drinks are cornmeal and cocoa (*tiste*); green banana, milk, and coconut water (*wabul*, typical of the Caribbean coast); ginger and sorrel drinks (also from the Caribbean coast; "sorrel" in the Caribbean refers to hibiscus flower buds); and purple corn (*pozole*).

This is an excellent way of using what is normally thrown away after using a fresh pineapple for a fruit salad.

peel and core from 1 fresh, very ripe pineapple, washed
½ cup uncooked white rice
water
½ cup sugar (or to taste)

In a saucepan, place the pineapple peels and core. Add enough water to cover.
Over medium heat, bring to a boil.
Lower heat and let simmer for 10–15 minutes.
Stir in the rice, and keep simmering until the rice grains split, for about 20 minutes.
Let cool.
Strain through a fine sieve.
Measure the strained liquid, and add twice the amount of water.
Add sugar to taste.
Chill well before serving.

Candied Mango (Almíbar de Mango)

Mixed candied fruit, usually of mango, pineapple, and other tropical fruits, called *almíbar*, or candied Spanish plums with milk and sugar (*cusnaca*) are traditional for Christmas. They may be served together with other sweets, such as milk and cocoa fudge (*leche burras*). Cold fruit and cereal drinks are popular accompaniments.

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1 cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
2 semi-ripe, firm mangos, peeled and cubed
1 pat butter

In a heavy 2-quart saucepan, dissolve the sugar in water.
Add cinnamon and cloves and bring to a boil over medium heat.
Stir in the mangoes. When the mixture comes back to a boil, add the butter to keep the mixture from boiling over, and stir constantly. Turn the heat down to the lowest possible, so that the syrup does not burn, but still continues to bubble.
Skim off any foam that rises.
When the syrup is very thick, after about 5 or more minutes of continuous boiling, turn off the heat.
Let mangoes cool in the syrup.

NIGER

Niger, a landlocked Central African country, is one of the poorest countries in the world. A thin strip in the south is fertile tropical savanna. The rest of the country is largely hot and dry desert. Desertification and drought are common phenomena. About 90 percent of the population are engaged in subsistence agriculture, based on a mix of dry farming and nomadic livestock raising. In the south, farmers raise sorghum, millet, peanuts, cassava, and beans.

The population comprises Muslims of the Hausa ethnic group, sub-Saharan Africans, and Arabs. Cooking combines North African and Central African influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: cassava, millet, sorghum, peanuts.
- Mutton is in high demand throughout most of the country.
- Fish are available from the Niger River in the south.
- Vegetables: cabbage, squashes and pumpkin, tomatoes, peppers, onions, beans, okra.
- Fruit: mangoes, melons, watermelons.
- Milk (ewe's milk in the north, cow's milk in the south) and soured milks.

Typical Dishes

- *Bondo gumbo*: a stew of lamb, okra, and peppers, served with a kind of wheat dumpling.
- Roast and spitted meat.
- Stiff porridge with stew.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day and snacks. Europeanized families tend to eat three meals a day.
- Families eat on a mat on the floor, surrounding a common bowl of staple and other bowls of as many side dishes as they can afford. Dining is with the right hand only. In the north in particular, men and women eat separately.

- Most meals are composed of the local staple: wheat dumplings, stiff porridge, served with a stew of vegetables, and, if available, meat.
- Drinks: sweet tea, sometimes infused with mint or wild sage; coffee; hibiscus tea; ginger beer; home- and commercially brewed beers.

Lamb Gumbo with Wheat Dumplings (Bondo Gumbo)

This is a one-dish meal commonly served for the main meal of the day.

2 TBS vegetable oil
2 pounds lean stewing lamb cut into 2-inch cubes
1 medium onion, chopped very fine
2 level TBS flour
½ cup tomato paste
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
1 tsp salt
1 pint water
1 pound fresh okra, cut into thin rounds (the finer the okra is cut, the more glutinous the stew)

Heat oil in a saucepan and brown lamb.
Add onion and flour to meat.
Mix well and and cook until flour is lightly browned.
Add tomato paste, peppers, salt, and water.
Simmer for 1 to 1½ hours, or until meat is tender.
Add okra and continue simmering until okra is cooked, about 5–8 minutes.
Serve in a deep dish with whole-wheat dumplings.

Whole-Wheat Dumplings

4½ ounces whole-wheat flour
about ¼ pint water
boiling water with 1 tsp salt

Mix flour and water and steam, covered, in the top of a double boiler for 30 minutes.
Mix well with a wooden spoon. Using a large soup spoon, remove balls of dough, about golf ball size, roll them to approximate ball shape, and slide carefully into a pot of the boiling salted water.
Cook for 10 minutes, timing after the balls float to the surface.
Remove with a slotted spoon and drain.

Fruit Salad

Desserts are not usually eaten, except in the cities where French influence is common, but many people enjoy a salad as a snack.

1 melon (any type), peeled, seeded, and cut into bite-sized chunks
½ fresh pineapple, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks
1 ripe but firm avocado, peeled and diced
¼ cup lemon juice
1 cup orange juice or thick fruit juice of your choice
cayenne pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients except pepper.
Provide pepper for diners to season on their own.

NIGERIA

Nigeria is a western African country on the Gulf of Guinea. The climate varies from tropical in the south to arid in the north. The south is a well-watered coastal plain with swamps at the massive Niger River Delta area. The center is largely a plateau, shading to plains in the north. Farmers raise both subsistence (millet, maize, sorghum, cassava, livestock) and cash (cocoa, palm oil) crops.

Africa's most populous country (over 120 million people), Nigeria is divided into many ethnic groups and religions, predominantly the Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani, and Igbo. About half are Muslims, the rest Christians and followers of indigenous religions.

Cooking is basic, focusing on staples that vary from one ethnic group to another but are usually some variation of the standard African staple (see Angola for the box "African Staple"). These are eaten with a sauce or stew, usually of vegetables, flavored with groundnuts (peanuts).

Foodstuffs

- Cassava, maize, millet, sorghum are staples, depending on area. Rice is eaten by those who can afford it.
- Meat: goat, mutton, beef (mainly in the north), chicken; some wild meats.
- Fish: river fish from the Niger River and its tributaries. Sea fish including mullet, parrotfish; seafood including crayfish, squid, shellfish along the coast.
- Vegetables: peppers, onions, peanuts, beans and other pulses, squashes and pumpkin.
- Fruit: bananas and plantains; coconut along the coast; citrus; coffee and cocoa.

Typical Dishes

- Staple porridge, eaten for all meals, or couscous variants in the north.
- Groundnut chop, a common dish for entertaining guests, of meat stewed with vegetables, served on rice with many little side dishes of raw and cooked vegetables.
- *Afang* soup or stew, made of local greens, served over the staple.
- Grilled meat—goat, beef, chicken—served with bread or rice.

- Drinks: beer is very common. Local and international soft-drinks, fruit juices, tea (English and North African style), and black coffee.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day whenever possible, and snacks.
- Families normally eat together around a series of common dishes, on a mat or carpet on the floor.
- Breakfast: thin porridge or bread or toast with coffee or tea (depending on area).
- Lunch: stew or soup, with carbohydrate, fruit.
- Supper: same as lunch. One or both of the midday and evening meals will have a meat or fish dish if possible.
- Most households have only one side dish (most often vegetables) at any meal, but the ideal is several such dishes, including meat and fish.
- Snacks include small twists of paper containing boiled and peppered peanuts bought from street vendors, elaborate teas at the restaurants and cafes in the cities.

Plantain and Crayfish (Kekefia)

This is a main dish served along the Niger River.

2 unripe plantains, peeled and chunked (available at Hispanic stores, or substitute green bananas)
1 tomato, chopped
2 bell peppers, cored, seeded, and diced
1 5-ounce piece smoked fish, skinned and deboned
1 pound crayfish or peeled shrimp/prawns
1 stock cube, crushed
½ cup palm oil (available from African stores)
salt and chili powder to taste

Place plantains in a pot. Cover barely with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes, or until tender.
Add tomato, peppers, and smoked fish and simmer for 5–10 minutes, until vegetables are softened.
Add crayfish, stock cube, and oil. Season to taste.
Simmer for an additional 10 minutes or until the broth is thick.
Serve hot, over staple.

Afang *Soup*

This soup made from *afang* (also called *ukazi*: *Gnetum africanum*, a type of green usually gathered from the forest) leaves, with meat, seafood, and palm oil is from southern coastal Nigeria, near the border with Cameroon, a major center of the palm oil industry. Periwinkles are sea snails popular in Africa and in some places

in Europe, but virtually ignored in the United States. Substitute your preferred shellfish.

2 cups stock (or 1 bouillon cube dissolved in 2 cups hot water)
1 pound stewing beef, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 onion, chopped
1 hot chili pepper, left whole (for mild soup) or chopped (for spicy soup)
water as needed
salt to taste
3 pounds periwinkles (sea snails) or any shellfish such as mussels or clams
2 TBS lime juice
About 4 ounces dried fish, skin and bones removed, soaked and rinsed in hot water (dried codfish slices are available in Caribbean and Hispanic stores; smaller whole dried fish, from Asian stores)
2 pounds *afang* leaves (or substitute any other greens: kale or collards), cleaned, stems removed, and torn into pieces or shredded
1 cup dried shrimps, crushed (available in Asian stores)
1 cup red palm oil (or canned palm soup base, available from African and Brazilian stores)
1 pound spinach, cleaned, stems removed, and torn into pieces or shredded

Heat stock in a large heavy pot to a simmer.
Add meat. Increase the heat to high and cook for 2–3 minutes.
Add onion and chili pepper. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer.
Meanwhile, in a separate pan, bring a few cups of lightly salted water to a boil.
Place the shellfish in the boiling water. Cover and cook for 2 or 3 minutes, or until the shells open. Remove and drain.
Remove the shellfish from their shells. If using periwinkles, you will need a thick needle; discard the hard foot and shells.
Drain, sprinkle with lime juice, and reserve.
Add the dried fish, *afang* leaves, dried shrimp, palm oil, and salt (taste first if needed as the stock cube and dried fish are salty) to the simmering beef.
Add more stock or water as needed to keep the soup liquid.
Cover and simmer for 15 minutes until the greens are almost tender.
Add the snails and spinach, and simmer for 3–5 minutes until spinach has wilted.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve with *fufu*, or boiled mashed yams.

Prawn Meat with Coconut and Bulghur

Both river and sea fish can be used for this recipe, or you can substitute imitation crab or other meat.

2 cups coconut milk
2 TBS onion, minced
2 medium tomatoes, peeled and quartered
½ tsp salt
½ tsp chili pepper
10 ounces prawn meat, beef or chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces
6 ounces bulghur (cracked wheat)

Combine coconut milk, onion, tomatoes, salt, chili pepper, and meat in a pot.
Simmer uncovered for 5 minutes.
Stir bulghur into the mixture and simmer for 15 minutes or more, or until meat and bulghur are done.
Serve as a main meal over cassava or millet porridge, or rice.

Groundnut Chop

This is a classic dish throughout western Africa, served often to guests. It allows for many variations, depending on the kind of meat and vegetables available.

2 TBS vegetable oil
2 onions, roughly chopped
1 chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 medium tomatoes, roughly chopped
3 cups stock
3 TBS ground peanuts, or 2 TBS natural peanut butter
1 medium eggplant, roughly chopped
1 hard-boiled egg per person, peeled
One serving of cooked rice per person

Heat oil and fry the onions until translucent.
Add chicken and brown lightly on all sides.
Add tomatoes and stock; bring to a boil and simmer for ½ hour.
Mix peanuts with some of the stock, and add the peanut mixture to the pot.
Once the stock has thickened, add eggplant. Simmer for 10 minutes or until tender.
Add eggs and cook an additional 5 minutes or until heated through.
Ladle stew over rice in individual soup bowls.
Place side dishes in the center of the table for diners to help themselves.
Any or all of the following may be used as a side dish:

sliced raw ripe pineapple
sliced ripe papaya
roasted whole peanuts

(*continued*)

sliced orange
fried onions
sliced raw onions
sliced tomato
sliced fresh bananas
sliced fried bananas
grated coconut
grated fresh ginger
finely shredded hot red and green chilies

Nigerian Kebabs (Suya)

This is eaten as a main dish with the staple, or as a snack from street stands.

1 cup roasted skinless peanuts
1 tsp red chili flakes
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp salt
½ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
2 pounds beef, chicken, or other meat, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 large onions, peeled and cut into chunks
2 large tomatoes, cut into chunks
2 green or red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chunked

Crush the peanuts to a fine powder (in a mortar, or use a food processor. Be careful not to grind them into a paste).
Stir all spices into the powder, mixing well.
Divide the peanut-spice mix between two bowls.
Roll the meat in one bowl of the peanut-spice mix, making sure the meat is completely coated. Allow meat to marinate for 1 hour.
Skewer the meat on metal skewers alternating with onion, tomato, and bell pepper chunks.
Broil under oven grill, or grill over hot coals, until meat is done.
Serve immediately with the second bowl of peanut-spice mix to sprinkle on. (Do not use the mix that came into contact with the raw meat.)

Bean Pudding (Moimoi)

Beans substitute for meat in most families. This would be served for any meal, including breakfast, with the staple.

2 cups dried black-eyed peas (cowpeas) or some other bean
1 TBS palm oil (or substitute vegetable oil)
1 TBS dried shrimp powder
1 tomato, peeled and chopped (or similar amount of canned tomatoes)
1 onion, chopped
salt and black pepper to taste
chili pepper to taste
oil for greasing
4 banana leaves and kitchen string for wrapping (or substitute 10×10-inch aluminum foil)

Cover black-eyed peas with boiling water and soak overnight.
Remove skins by rubbing, and discard. Drain.
Mash the peas in a food processor. Slowly add enough water to form a smooth, thick paste. Add oil and blend.
Combine the dried shrimp, tomato, onion, and seasonings together and mix well.
Add the mixture to the black-eyed peas and mix thoroughly.
Grease the banana leaves (or foil). Place 2 tablespoons of mixture in each banana leaf/foil square. Fold over several times to make a sealed rectangular packet. (Use string to close the banana leaf packets.)
Steam packets above boiling water for 30 minutes.
Check one for doneness with a toothpick or a sharp knife. The pudding should have firmed up but still be moist, not gooey.
Serve hot or at room temperature.

Millet Balls in Yogurt (Fura da Nono)

This is a snack that can also be eaten as dessert from northeastern Nigeria.

1 pound millet flour (available from health food or specialty stores)
½ TBS mixed spices (powdered cinnamon, cardamom, and nutmeg)
½ cup cold water
wheat flour
1 cup yogurt
sugar or honey to taste

Blend millet flour and spice mix.
Add sufficient water to make a firm paste. Knead for 10 minutes.
Allow dough to rest, covered, in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
Divide dough into eight, and form each into a ball.
Roll each ball in wheat flour to avoid sticking.
Place, well apart, into an oiled steamer and steam for 15 minutes.
Serve in individual plates, ladling yogurt and honey on top.

NORWAY

Until a century ago, Norway was ruled by Sweden. Currently a constitutional monarchy, it enjoys a high standard of living due to oil revenues and even distribution of wealth by a welfare state system. The country is mountainous, and much of the interior is heavily forested. With a cool, temperate climate farmers raise vegetables, cold-hardy grains (barley, rye, and wheat), and dairy animals. Milk products are a major item of diet, along with marine products including cod, herring, and whale.

Norwegian food resembles that of Sweden and Denmark, characterized by a high consumption of dairy products and fish.

Foodstuffs

- Various grains (barley, oats, wheat, and rye predominating) for making breads, cakes, and porridge (the latter, until the modern era, was the major staple).
- Various forms of bread, notably *lefse*, a flat, crisp or soft bread of wheat, oats, or rye. Soft *lefse*, also made with potatoes, often contain cream.
- Dairy: cow's and ewe's milk, butter and cheeses, notably a sweet goat's milk cheese called *geitost* (also *gjetost*).
- Meat: beef, pork, mutton, chicken. Venison (moose, elk, and reindeer) in the north are common items of diet.
- Fish is crucial to much of the diet. Herring, cod, and particularly mackerel in the summer; crayfish; salmon (*laks*), both cooked, pickled (*gravlaks*) and smoked. Smoked salmon is an original Norwegian dish.
- Vegetables: potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions.
- Fruit: apples, cherries, and berries (strawberries, blueberries, cloudberries).
- Seasonings: dill, sour cream, pepper, mustard, allspice, bay leaf, cardamom (in baked goods), curry powder (contemporary).

Typical Dishes

- Pizza. Norwegians are the world's champion pizza eaters. The population of 4.6 million people ate 50 million pizzas in 2004.
- *Lutefisk*, cooked spiced codfish (the favorite pre-Christmas dish); *spekemat*, cooked pork or lamb meat accompanied by sour cream; *smalahove*, boiled sheep's head.

- Meat patties (*kjöttkaker*), lamb or mutton and cabbage stew (fårikål), potato dumplings (*komler* or *raspeball*), dried mutton ribs, and fresh cod.
- *Kvitsøyball* (mackerel cakes), *Kristiansundball* (saithe cakes), fried mackerel, fermented trout (*rakefish*, similar to Swedish fermented *surströmming* or *surfisk* and Iceland's fermented shark, *hákarl*).
- *Moltekrem*, cloudberries with whipped cream and rosemary flavoring; ginger snaps, doughnuts, cones and other traditional cakes and cookies for Christmas; rice cream with red fruit sauce for Christmas dinner dessert.

CLOUDBERRY

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: *geitost* and pickled herring with *lefse*.
- Lunch: often little more than a snack. Many people eat sandwiches with eggs, cheese, vegetables, or preserved meat of some sort.
- Dinner: major meal of the day, with appetizer, main dish of fish (meat is eaten less), carbohydrates and vegetables, and a dessert.
- Cakes and cookies, often flavored with cardamom, as well as snacks of cheese and hard *lefse* are eaten at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
- Drinks include milk and coffee. Many meals are washed down with fresh or sour milk. Norwegians as a whole tend to drink little alcohol.

Fishballs (Fiskeboller)

This is a standard everyday meal more popular than meat. There are different styles depending on the region. It is normally served on a shell-shaped pastry, either bought or homemade, surrounded with cold peeled shrimps and cooked asparagus.

1 pound any firm white fish (cod, pollock)
2 eggs
½ cup milk or cream
3 TBS flour
salt to taste
3 cups fish stock (or 3 cubes fish stock dissolved in 3 cups hot water), for cooking
Garnish: 1 cup peeled small cooked shrimp, 1 cup boiled asparagus tips (optional)
For serving: 4 vol-au-vent shells or shell-shaped pastry shells (optional)

Mix all ingredients except stock in a food processor until smooth.
Chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour.
Bring the fish stock to a simmer.

(*continued*)

Prepare the balls. With hands moistened in water, take spoonfuls of the mix and roll between your palms to shape into cherry-sized balls.
Moisten hands before shaping each ball.
Slide each ball into the simmering stock. Cook only a few at a time for about 2–3 minutes.
The balls are done when they are firm. Remove and drain.
Serve with curry-flavored sauce in a pastry shell with shrimps and asparagus, if desired.
Accompanying side dishes can be cooked vegetables or fried or roast potatoes.

Sauce

stock from cooking fish balls
2 ounces butter
2 ounces flour
½ tsp curry powder

Strain the stock.
Heat butter in a saucepan. Sprinkle with flour and stir constantly while the roux cooks to pale gold.
Add stock, 1 tablespoon at a time until a thick sauce forms, whisking constantly. Add the rest of stock, while continuing to whisk.
Remove from fire and stir in curry powder.

Pickled Herring (Sursild)

A traditional dish always served on Christmas breakfast.

4 whole salted herrings (available from delicatessens)
3 large onions, sliced into thin rings
1 TBS peppercorns
1 TBS mustard seeds
8 cloves
5 allspice berries
1 bay leaf
1 cup 7 percent vinegar
1½ cups sugar
2 cups cold water

Soak the herrings in water for 1–2 hours, rinse, fillet, pat dry, and cut in ½-inch strips.
In a covered nonreactive container, mix the onions and spices with the herring.
Mix the vinegar, sugar, and cold water, and stir until the sugar has dissolved.
Cover the herring with the vinegar marinade and leave for at least 1 day.
Serve, with the onion rings, with rye bread or Swedish crackers to make open sandwiches.

Meldal Soup (Meldalsodd)

Sodd is a specialty of Trøndelag (southern Norway). It is always made with several different kinds of meat.

- 2 pounds mixed, boneless meat (beef, pork, and mutton), cut into bite-sized pieces
- 3 pints water
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp peppercorns
- 1-inch piece fresh or dried ginger root
- 1 tsp chopped onion
- 2 cups carrots, scraped and finely chopped
- 2 cups turnips, peeled and diced
- 2 cups cabbage, diced
- ½ pound ground meat (chicken, turkey, or pork) seasoned with salt, pepper, or nutmeg, as desired, for meatballs

Simmer the meat in water, salt, peppercorns, and ginger until tender (60–90 minutes).
Remove meat and arrange on a serving dish. Strain stock and return to pot.
Add vegetables to stock and simmer until tender.
Meantime, form the ground meat into marble-sized balls and simmer in the stock with the vegetables for about 5 minutes.
Pour some of the cooking liquid over the meat. Serve with boiled potatoes and flat bread, accompanied by the soup and meatballs.

Pot Roast (Slottsstek)

This would normally be made from venison (moose or elk), but can also be made from beef or other meat.

- 2 TBS butter
- 2 TBS vegetable oil
- 4 pounds beef (round, rump, or chuck roast)
- 2 sliced onions
- 3 TBS flour
- 3 TBS dark molasses
- 4 TBS white vinegar
- 2 cups beef stock (or 2 bouillon cubes dissolved in 2 cups water)
- 1 tsp whole peppercorns
- salt and ground black pepper to taste
- ½ cup milk or half-and-half

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a heavy 6-quart iron pot or casserole, melt butter and oil. When the foam subsides, add meat and brown on all sides.
Remove the meat and reserve.
Add onions to the pot and sauté until golden.
Remove the pot from heat; add flour and stir to mix thoroughly with the fat.
Pour in the molasses, vinegar, stock, peppercorns, and black pepper.
Return the meat to the pot. Add hot water half way up the pot.
Place the pot in the center of the oven. Bake at very low heat so that the liquid barely simmers, for about 3 hours, or until the meat is tender.

(*continued*)

Transfer meat to a warmed serving dish, discard any bones, and cover lightly with foil to keep warm.
Skim any surface fat from the cooking liquid.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Stir in the milk and bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
Serve with potato dumplings, boiled carrots and peas, and the gravy.

Potato Dumplings (Klubb)

Potatoes are a major source of carbohydrates. Together with barley, they have been staples of the Norwegian diet for centuries. These potato dumplings are a typical countryside dish which would have been eaten frequently by the poor before Norway's modern prosperity.

2 pounds potatoes, peeled and grated
½ pound barley flour
½ pound boiled potatoes, peeled and mashed
salt to taste
3 quarts boiling salted water

Mix grated potato with flour immediately before the potatoes oxidize (turn brown).
Mix with mashed potatoes and season.
With moistened hands, roll the potato mixture into balls.
Drop a few at a time into simmering salted water in a wide pot, and cook for approximately 30 minutes. Do not crowd the dumplings. Drain and keep warm while cooking the remaining balls.
Serve with a meat dish.

Creamed Rice

This dish is often served as a dessert at Christmas dinner.

2½ cups milk
1 cup risotto or short-grain rice
1½ cup cream
2 TBS sugar
1 tsp vanilla sugar
cooked red berries or jam

Heat milk and pour into rice in a steady stream.
Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until the rice is soft, about 15–20 minutes.

Whip cream with sugar and vanilla sugar.
Remove rice from heat and mix gently but thoroughly with cream.
Serve with cooked red berries (cranberry, strawberry, or other) or jam.

OMAN

A small country on the eastern corner of the Arabian peninsula, Oman is a dry, hot desert. Dates are the most widely grown crop. For many centuries, Oman controlled large swathes of the east African coast, where they traded for slaves, ivory, and gold. The people and cuisine reflect this maritime and trade history.

Foodstuffs

- Rice and breads of wheat flour are the popular staples.
- Meat: camel is preferred above all. Goat, lamb, beef also consumed.
- Seafood of all kinds is very common along the coast.
- Fruit: many varieties of dates, both *rutub* (fresh) and dried (*sih*), are eaten, fresh preferred, at almost every meal. Mangoes are consumed in great quantities. Apples, oranges, bananas.
- Dairy: *sehman*, fresh butter clarified by boiling with flour and spices (cumin, coriander); *laban* (buttermilk). The preferred drink is camel milk, drunk fresh with sugar and wild thyme.
- Spices are used liberally: cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, black pepper, onions, garlic, ginger, and dried lime.

Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes include plain steamed rice flavored with ghee, and elaborate biryanis and pilafs: *ruz al mudhroub*, a dish of rice with fried fish and *maqdeed* (dried meat); *arisia*, lamb cooked with rice; *mekboos*, boiled meat with rice pilaf.
- *Muqalab*, tripe and duck flavored with ground and crushed spices; skewered meats (kebabs); *mukalai*, meat stew spiced with garlic and black pepper and served over paper-thin dry bread; *dijajkhasoosi* (stewed chicken); *ras ghanam mahalby*, boiled head of goat, with fresh soup and flat bread.
- During Ramadan: *sakhanka*, a thick sweet soup made of wheat, date molasses, and milk; *fatta*, a meat and vegetable dish mixed with unleavened bread (*khubz rakhal*).
- *Shuwa* or *tanour*: a special dish for Eid-al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan, which a whole community shares. Meat (sometimes a whole cow or goat) is marinated in spices (cardamom, cumin, cloves, cinnamon, garlic, pepper, and dried lime) and date paste. Wrapped in banana leaves and sacking, it is buried in a pit oven lined with hot charcoal, and allowed to cook for 48 hours.

- A variety of vegetable and meat soups of lentils, lamb, chicken.
- Salads made from fresh vegetables, grilled eggplant, tuna, dried fish, and greens.
- Many kinds of breads: plain, and flavored with sesame, wild thyme and garlic, dates.
- *Samboosa* (small vegetable and meat pies), *loqamatt* (small doughnuts dipped in honey).
- *Halwa*, made from sugar and spices and flavored with sesame seeds or almonds.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day and plenty of snacks is standard, but more and more people are eating three times a day.
- Traditional meals are eaten by the entire family sitting around a common dish of rice and meat or vegetables, eaten with the right hand only. Male and female guests eat separately.
- Soups (served in a glass) and a main course—vegetable curry; barbecued, grilled, curried meats, chicken, and fish—with salad and bread make up the main meal.
- Breakfast: bread dipped in *laban* (buttermilk), or sometimes a full meal with rice. Every breakfast and almost all other meals include dates, *laban*, and *loqamatt*.

Lamb and Date Stew

Dates are so important that they feature in most meals and many dishes (see box "Dates").

1 tsp crushed dried red chili pepper
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt
2 TBS olive oil
2 pounds boneless leg of lamb (or beef), cut into 1-inch cubes
2 large onions, chopped
3 cloves of garlic, minced
3 cups beef stock (or 1½ beef bouillon cubes dissolved in 3 cups hot water)
1 TBS cornstarch
2 TBS cold water
1 cup of pitted dates
cooked white rice for 4
¼ cup of toasted slivered almonds (optional)

In a mixing bowl combine the spices and salt.
Coat meat with the spice mixture.
In a large, heavy skillet heat oil over medium-high heat. Quickly brown the meat.
Add onions and garlic, and stir to combine. Pour the stock over all.
Bring to a boil. Cover and simmer on the lowest heat for a couple of hours or till the meat is tender. Skim fat from the surface.
Stir cornstarch into cold water; add to meat in the pan and stir.

(*continued*)

Add dates and stir to combine. Cover and simmer for another 15 minutes or till mixture is slightly thick.
Serve hot over white rice, and garnish with toasted almonds.

Fish with Rice (Mezroota)

In Oman, a special local dried fish called *o'al* is used, but this is rarely available in the United States.

½ pound dried fish (substitute dried codfish, available in Hispanic stores, or 1 can of tuna, drained)
2 TBS turmeric powder
4 cups onions, thinly sliced
3 rounded TBS of salt
2 TBS melted butter
¼ cup lemon or lime juice
1 TBS ground cumin
½ tsp cayenne pepper powder
1 TBS slightly crushed *za'atar* (wild hyssop) leaves (or substitute oregano)
cooked white rice for 4

Soak the fish in fresh water for 1 hour. (If using tuna, skip this step.)
Replace the water and simmer with turmeric powder until tender.
Drain. Flake fish flesh and discard bones (or mix flaked tuna meat with turmeric).
Place onions in a bowl, salt well, and mix thoroughly.
Place the bowl outside in direct sunlight on a hot day and leave for at least an hour. (Or place in a low oven on a cookie sheet for 1 hour.)
Wash the onions thoroughly in fresh water, squeezing them gently. Drain. Repeat twice.
Add fish and the rest of the ingredients to the onions.
Season to taste.
Serve immediately over hot cooked white rice.

DATES

Dates are the fruit of a palm, *Phoenix dactylifera*, originating in the Middle East. The fruit—cylindrical in shape, about 1–3 inches long, in colors ranging from yellow to deep brown—ripens in four stages. There are three general types: moist, semi-dry, and dry dates, which vary in their sugar content and properties. The moist varieties do not travel well and the best types are rarely seen outside their native habitats.

Dates are eaten raw or cooked. Dried dates can be preserved as long as they are protected from pests and, as a result, have been a major storage crop in the Middle East. As the yield is high and the energy content of the fruit is excellent, they have served as a staple for Middle Eastern nomads, who, in some cases, subsist largely on dates and the product of their herds.

Sweet Vermicelli (Swayweih)

This is a popular dish for breakfast.

½ cup onion, finely minced
4 TBS butter
3 eggs
2 cups of dry, uncooked *swayweih* noodles (available from Middle Eastern stores; or substitute very fine Italian vermicelli, broken into 2-inch pieces)
⅓ cup desiccated coconut
⅓ cup sugar
1 TBS cardamom powder
6 saffron threads, soaked in 1 tsp water for 5 minutes

In a large frying pan, sauté onion in 2 tablespoons butter until light brown.
Remove from the pan and reserve.
Scramble eggs in the sauté pan, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and reserve.
In a separate saucepan, bring water to boil and add the vermicelli.
Cook until the vermicelli is al dente. (Be careful as it cooks very quickly.) Remove from heat and run quickly under cold water. Drain.
To the eggs in the pan, add coconut, sugar, cardamom, saffron, reserved onions, the remaining butter, and the vermicelli.
Return to medium-low heat and cook while stirring for 2–3 minutes until heated through.
Serve warm.

Sweet Porridge (Khabeesa)

This is served with coffee or tea as a snack.

¾ cup *khabeesa* (farina, cream of wheat)
5 cups milk
⅓ cup sugar
1 TBS cardamom powder
2 TBS butter
2 TBS rosewater
10 saffron threads

Combine all of the ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat immediately to the lowest possible and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Serve warm in individual bowls.

Earth Oven Roast (Shuwa *or* Tanour)

This is a special dish for the Eid-al-Fitr festival, celebrating the end of the month-long feast of Ramadan. The celebration often involves the whole community.

2 pounds roasting meat (beef, mutton, lamb) with bone
1 TBS cardamom powder
1 TBS cumin powder
1 TBS powdered cloves
1 tsp cinnamon powder
5 garlic cloves, crushed and minced fine
1 tsp chili pepper
1 tsp dried lime powder (available from Middle Eastern stores, or substitute equivalent grated lime rind)
½ cup date paste (available from Middle Eastern stores, sometimes called date jam)
6 banana leaves (substitute white or Savoy cabbage or collards)
1 clean, new Hessian sack (or substitute lidded, thick Dutch oven)

Prepare an earth oven (see New Zealand for the box "Polynesian Earth Oven") or, alternatively, a Dutch oven.
Mix all spices, garlic, and date paste thoroughly.
Rub spice mixture into meat, being careful to cover all parts.
Allow meat to marinate for at least 6 hours or overnight in refrigerator.
Wrap meat in several layers of banana leaves. Secure leaves with kitchen string.
Moisten sack lightly. Place leaf-wrapped meat in stock.
Place in earth oven, cover, and allow to bake for 24 hours. Alternatively, place roast in Dutch oven, cover, and bake for 12 hours at 275°F.
Serve hot with a rice dish and flat bread.

Tea (Chai)

In most Omani homes, a cup of tea is essential for breakfast and is always served to guests.

4 cups water
4 TBS sugar
4 TBS tea leaves or 4 tea bags
1 TBS powdered ginger
¾ cup unsweetened evaporated milk

Boil water with sugar and tea over high heat for 2–3 minutes.
Add the ginger and milk.
Bring to a boil again.
Immediately remove from heat before tea boils over.
Strain into cups and serve.

PACIFIC ISLANDS: MELANESIA

Melanesia is a group of island political entities in the western Pacific, including Fiji (see separate entry), New Caledonia (a French dependency, see separate entry), Papua New Guinea (see separate entry), the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu (see separate entry). Nauru is an island republic in the South Pacific Ocean, north of the Solomon Islands and south of the Marshall Islands. The climate in all of them is tropical and warm, often mediated by cooling trade winds and altitude. The sea, volcanic islands, and coral atolls characterize the habitat and land forms. The terrain of most of the islands is generally quite rugged, with foothills that rise gently to a peak and then fall away steeply to the sea on the other side.

The population is largely made up of a mix of Austronesians (related to the Australian aborigines) and Papuans that blended prehistorically. This population is also ancestral to the Polynesians. Communal, familial, and clan ties remain very strong in Solomon Islands. Most people consider themselves to be part of an immediate family of 200 and can trace back their ancestors to at least ten generations. The *Pijin* word *wantok*—which derives from "one talk," meaning "people from the same language group"—is used to indicate blood relatives in the extended family.

The main traditional sources of food are taro, breadfruit, sweet potato, coconut, pigs, and fish. These are normally consumed at all meals, with meat or fish being eaten at the main meal of the day, often in the afternoon. Cooking practices are similar as well in these islands: simmering or boiling were fairly recently introduced since pottery was not practiced. Most traditional cooking was done by fermenting, roasting, or baking in an earth oven. Dining practices vary, ranging from men eating separately from women and children in "men's houses" to shared "family" dining of all 200 or so named kin.

Foods introduced by missionaries, visitors, sailors, and the military during World War II have become part of the local staples, including canned meats (corned beef, Spam), canned fish (tuna, sardines), concentrated milk (unsweetened evaporated and sweetened condensed), sugar, and flour. Immigrants from China, India, and Europe have also introduced their foods to the islands.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: sweet potatoes, taro (corms and leaves), coconuts, yams, rice, cassava (corms and leaves).

- Meat: pork, beef (usually imported).
- Fish: a variety of fish and seafood, both pelagic fish and reef, are caught and eaten; octopus and squid; clams and other shellfish.
- Fruit: more than eighty varieties of bananas are raised on the islands, both sweet and cooking varieties, and are a major element in food security. Palm kernels, cocoa, watermelon and melons, pandan fruit.
- Drink: fresh coconut juice, fresh fruit juices, palm toddy, bottled soft drinks.

Typical Dishes

- Tapioca pudding and cooked taro.
- Fish cooked in an oven or grilled.
- Pork and yams cooked in an earth oven.

Styles of Eating

- Food is eaten from individual bowls with the fingers.
- Main meal of the day is at midday and usually includes fish with taro and coconut.

Sweet Potato Soup

Sweet potato is an important staple.

2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
1 squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into chunks
1 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into pieces
2 onions, minced
1 pound cassava root, peeled and cut into chunks
1 cup coconut milk
salt to taste

Place all ingredients except coconut milk into a pot and cover with water.
Simmer until vegetables are tender.
Mix coconut milk into the soup, add salt, and simmer for a further 5 minutes.
Serve hot.

Taro Cake

This is frequently made as a snack, or as an additional side dish for a meal.

2 pounds freshly grated taro
1 pound freshly grated coconut (substitute 2 cups desiccated coconut, refreshed with 1 cup warm coconut or regular milk)

1 cup toddy syrup (or substitute ½ cup *jaggery*, palm sugar available from Indian stores, dissolved in ½ cup warm water)

washed taro or banana leaves and kitchen string for wrapping (or substitute aluminum foil)

In a food processor or mixer, blend taro and coconut well.
Add syrup and with the dough hook (if using mixer) knead or process until well distributed and taro mix becomes a stiff dough (add more taro or coconut if necessary for right consistency).
Remove the dough and wrap in several layers of taro leaves (or foil). Alternatively, place in two greased loaf pans and cover with foil.
Bake in an earth oven (see New Zealand for the box "Polynesian Earth Oven") for 4 hours, turning 3 or 4 times until done. If using an oven, bake at 300°F for 45–60 minutes, or until loaves test done.

Coconut Sweet

This is often served as a snack.

2 cups toddy syrup (or substitute ½ cup *jaggery*, palm sugar available from Indian stores, dissolved in 2 cups warm water)

2 cups freshly grated coconut (substitute 2 cups desiccated coconut, refreshed with 1 cup warm coconut or regular milk)

In a heavy saucepan, combine syrup and coconut.
Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until it thickens, about 20–25 minutes.
Remove from heat and allow to cool.
Roll handfuls together to make balls about the size of small plums.

PACIFIC ISLANDS: MICRONESIA

This region in the Pacific Ocean comprises several national entities: the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap—see separate entry); Kiribati; Marshall Islands (see separate entries); Niue; Palau; and the U.S. protectorates Guam and the Northern Marianas. They are presented together because of common geographical features, population, and climate. The original Micronesians speak a variety of languages related to Austronesian, Papuan, and Southeast Asian (Indonesian and Filipino) languages.

Niue is one of the smallest countries in the world. Originally settled by migrating Tongans, Samoans, and Cook Islanders, Niue evolved a unique culture and language, similar to, but quite separate from, its neighbors. That makes more sense when you realize that the land itself is totally unlike that of its neighbors: a single, large atoll surrounding a giant lagoon. The name "Niue" translates as "Behold! A coconut!"

Commercial fishing is a growth industry, as are some high-value crops like vanilla. Niueans traditionally emphasize the freshness and quality of their food, using food differences as yet another way to distinguish themselves from neighboring countries.

The climate in these small islands is tropical, modified by monsoons. Many of the islands are low lying and can suffer from drought. The main sources of food are taro, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, coconut, pigs, and fish. These are normally consumed at all meals, with meat or fish being eaten at the main meal of the day, often in the afternoon. Cooking practices are similar as well: simmering or boiling were fairly recently introduced since pottery was not practiced. Most traditional cooking was done by fermenting, roasting, or baking in an earth oven. The islands have variously been (or are) the colonial possessions of Spain, Germany, Japan, Britain, and the United States, and the foods on individual islands have been affected by the colonial history.

Foods introduced by missionaries, visitors, sailors, and the military during World War II have become part of the local staples, including canned meats (corned beef, Spam), canned fish (sardines, tuna), concentrated milk, sugar, and flour. In addition, Filipino and Chinese migrants have brought along their foods. Different immigration and political patterns have led to differences in food: Marianas and Guam cooking show elements of Spanish cooking from Spanish colonization, American dishes (from the American presence), and dishes from Filipino and Japanese cooking. Influence from Hawaiian cooking is also evident.

Foodstuffs

- Meat: pork, chicken, dog (on Pohnpei), fruit bat (in Guam), dugong.
- Fish: tuna is the most commonly eaten fish all over Micronesia, often raw; giant clams, sea cucumber, reef fish, shellfish, dolphin fish (*mahi-mahi*), lobsters, mangrove crabs, giant clams (*Tridacna*), sea cucumber, eels, shrimp, catfish, turtle, and coconut crab.
- Vegetables: taro of various types, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, cassava, yams, arrowroot starch, eggplants.
- Fruit: coconut, pandanus fruit, papaya, bananas, tangerines, pumpkin, plantain.
- Imported foods: rice, bread, beer, canned mackerel, Spam and corned beef, cheese and dairy products, ice cream.
- Drinks: sweet toddy (*te karewe*); sour toddy (alcoholic, *te kaokioli*); a drink made from the roots of pepper shrubs (*kava or sakau,* the name depending on the island); fermented coco sap (*tuba*) (see box "*Kava*").

Typical Dishes

- *Oppot* is a traditional Chuukese specialty, made by filling a pit with alternating layers of ripe breadfruit and banana leaves, covering it with rocks, and allowing it to ferment for months, even years, before eating.
- In Niue, chunks of fish marinated in coconut milk (*faikai*); slices of taro and pawpaw wrapped in leaves and baked (*takihi*).
- In Palau, boiled stingray.
- Betel nut (*buw*) is chewed after meals on some islands, notably Yap.
- For long journeys a sweet "bread" is made from yeast from the sour toddy, toddy, pandanus fruit flour, and grated coconut, dried in the sun and pounded. This can be stored for a long time and in premodern times was kept as a hardship food.
- In Guam and the Northern Marianas: *finadene* is a spicy sauce made of chili peppers, onions, and vinegar or lemon is almost always on the table.
- Carbohydrates and vegetable dishes: corn soup (*elotes*); breadfruit cooked in taro leaves; coconut porridge; sliced boiled taro; baked breadfruit (*um mas*);

KAVA

In the South Pacific, the preparation and consumption of *kava* is an important social occasion that requires respect and ritual. *Kava* is used to evoke sociability. It is also used as a means to spiritual inspiration. It is made from the roots of a vine related to black pepper (*Piper methysticum*). It is consumed over much of Polynesia and Micronesia. *Kava* was traditionally a chief's drink, used in ceremonies before or after important decisions. On some islands, women were forbidden *kava*; on others, it was drunk by all.

Kava looks like muddy brown water, and the taste is acquired. Often it is drunk while holding a piece of sugarcane in the mouth. It slightly numbs the mouth and palate.

The pulpy root is washed and cut, then grated or pounded (traditionally, it was chewed, then spat out by boys, young men, or young women to break up the fibers) into a pulp. The juice is then squeezed out through a coconut fiber sieve and drunk.

Nowadays dried *kava* powder is also available commercially.

steamed taro (*kutak*); fried bananas (*bonelos aga*); rice colored red by *achuete* seeds; fried coconut-flavored breakfast cornmeal tortillas (*titiyas*) can be bought, but are also made at home.
- Fish and other seafood cooked in coconut milk (*cadon guihan*); raw fish served with coconut curry sauce; raw fish with lime juice; fermented fish; grilled fish (*tininu guihan*).
- Meat dishes: beef, chicken, or other meat prepared with lemon, onions, shredded coconut meat, and peppery hot *finadene* sauce is called *kelaguen,* and is almost the signature dish on the islands; chicken stewed with tomatoes and onions (*estufao*); pork, shrimp, and vegetables in pastry (*lumpia*); roast suckling pig; *sukiyaki* with papaya and meat (adapted from Japanese original); dried beef or fish (*tinala katne* or *tinala guihan*).
- Sweets: Northern Marianas—bananas simmered in coconut milk (*saibok*), custard and sponge cake dessert with cinnamon (*lantiyas*), papaya turnover (*pastit*), steamed rice cake (*potu*), fried rice cake (*bibinka*), coconut candy (*bukayo*); Guam—deep-fried yam with syrup (*bonelos dago*) sweet coconut and rice pudding (*kalamai*) banana doughnuts (*bonelos aga*) layer cake with coconut and cream filling (*latiya*).
- Marshall Islands—tapioca mixed with dried coconut and covered with sweetened coconut milk (*pihlolo*).
- Palau—young taro stems boiled, peeled, and mixed with sugar and coconut milk (*elang*); pandanus fruit flour cooked with palm sugar and coconut milk (*merekou*).
- Imported foods: Filipino and Japanese dishes commonly served in restaurants; Asian foods (*sukiyaki, soba*, *lumpia*, and various Chinese dishes); tuna *sashimi* is available all over Micronesia; hot dog in croissants; American fast foods such as cheeseburgers, tacos, and pizza.

Styles of Eating

- Traditionally, one or two meals (breakfast and dinner eaten late afternoon [called "tea" in Niue]) a day and snacks (a meal without a staple is a snack). Most urban households today eat three meals a day and plenty of snacks.
- Breakfast: fruit and some starch, preserved fish, condiment. In Guam and the Marianas breakfast is a heavy meal: fried rice, eggs, and sausage. In some households in Kiribati, Western-style fluffy pancakes with *te kamaimai* (toddy syrup).
- Lunch: urban—Western-style sandwich, pasta, pizza.
- Evening meal: traditional taro and pork; or Western-influenced potatoes, bread, and oven-roasted meat or meat and vegetable stew and a sweet dessert.
- Snacks: often very sweet cakes or other confectionary. Modern Micronesians now have a problem with obesity and its consequences, such as diabetes.

Relish (Finadene)

Finadene (pronounced fin-ah-dén-ee) is a salty, spicy, sour condiment found on every table in Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands. Use on anything, including as an ingredient in marinades.

10–12 hot chili peppers, cored, seeded, and minced fine
⅓ cup soy sauce
½ cup lemon juice
½ cup chopped onions

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend to desired consistency.
Serve with anything savory.

Coconut Milk with Rice (Alaguan)

Rice has become a desired foodstuff all over Micronesia.

1 cup rice
3 cups water
1 cup coconut milk

Bring water to a boil.
Add rice and cook until soft (the result should be a thick gruel; if there is insufficient water, add boiling water, a little at a time, to reach porridgy consistency).
Add coconut milk and bring to a simmer.
Serve as a main dish for breakfast.

Stewed Pumpkin Flowers

Squash and pumpkin are versatile vegetables: their fruits, young shoots, and flowers are all eaten. This is a contemporary dish in Niue.

1 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
1 large tomato, chopped
1 can tuna fish
1 cup stock (or 1 stock cube dissolved in 1 cup warm water)
20 pumpkin or zucchini flowers (available from specialty stores or farmers' markets), centers removed, washed, and drained
salt, pepper to taste

Heat oil in a saucepan or wok. Add the onion and sauté until golden.
Add the tomato and sauté for 2–3 minutes.
Add tuna and stock, and cook for about 10 minutes.
When mixture comes to a boil, add pumpkin flowers; season with salt and pepper.
Cook for 2–3 minutes, or just until pumpkin flowers are wilted. Do not overcook.
Serve hot with cooked breadfruit, banana, taro, or yam.

Chunky Lumpia

Lumpia equivalents are popular throughout Asia and have been adopted in the Marianas and other areas of Micronesia as well. The meat can be omitted for a vegetarian version.

1 pound pork (or any other meat: chicken, fish, shrimp, beef), cut into thin strips
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips
¼ cup tomato paste
2 medium onions, sliced
¼ tsp grated ginger
1 stalk celery, sliced thin
2 TBS vegetable oil
salt and chili powder to taste
1 pound squash, peeled, cut into strips
12 *lumpia* or spring/egg roll wrappers (available from Asian stores and some supermarkets)
6 TBS oil

Combine meat, bell pepper, tomato paste, onions, ginger, and celery. Season to taste.
Allow to rest for 1 hour.
Heat oil in a wok. Stir-fry meat mixture over high heat until meat is done (5–10 minutes depending on meat used).
Reduce heat. Add squash and continue cooking until squash is tender but still firm, about 8–10 minutes.
Remove from heat and divide mixture into twelve portions.
Place a portion onto the bottom half of a wrapper. Fold over bottom once, then sides, then roll up into an oblong package like an egg-roll.
Heat 6 tablespoons oil in a clean wok.
Fry *lumpia* two or three at a time, ensuring they do not touch, until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve as snack or appetizer with dipping sauce, such as *finadene*.

Eggplants in Coconut Milk

Eggplants were introduced from Southeast Asia and, in Spanish-controlled Marianas, became a major food item.

3 medium eggplants
2 chili peppers, cored, seeded, and shredded
1 medium onion, chopped fine
2 cups coconut milk
salt to taste
juice of 4 limes

Roast eggplant over a naked flame or under a grill, turning to cook evenly, until skin is blistered and the fruit has collapsed, about 15–20 minutes.
Remove from heat, let cool.

Lay eggplants on a plate or chopping board and slice open, then remove pulp with a spoon (if some skin comes along, that is fine). Chop flesh.
Mix well with the remaining ingredients.
Serve as salad or appetizer with coconut-flavored or plain corn tortillas.

Lime-Marinated Meat (Kelaguen)

This is the signature dish of the Marianas, perhaps more than any other. Any kind of meat or fish can be used. The *kelaguen* is identified by the meat used, for example, beef *kelaguen* or chicken *kelaguen*. Serve as main dish or snack.

- 1 pound good, lean steak, sliced thin into bite-sized pieces, or
- 1 pound grilled boneless chicken meat, cooled, sliced into bite-sized pieces, or
- 1 pound canned corned beef, cubed, or
- 1 pound fish meat, either fresh raw, or cooked, deboned and sliced into bite-sized pieces
- 1 tsp salt
- juice of 4 limes
- 1 medium onion, sliced very thin
- 4 spring onions, sliced thin
- 4 red chili peppers, cored, seeded, and shredded (or any balance of hot and small bell peppers)

Place meat in a bowl with salt.
Mix very thoroughly, then add remaining ingredients.
Allow to marinate for 45 minutes.
Serve with *titiyas*/tortillas or over hot rice.

Ham and Chickpeas (Hamon Yan Gatbansos)

This is a Marianas main dish served with rice.

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped fine
- 4 cloves garlic, minced fine
- 1 small red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cubed
- 2 small green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cubed
- 1 pound cooked ham (canned is fine), chopped
- 3 cups canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*), drained (some liquid reserved)
- salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil and sauté onion until translucent. Add garlic and stir for 1 minute.
Add peppers and cook, stirring.

(*continued*)

Add ham and cook for 1 minute.
Add chickpeas and enough liquid to ensure there is some gravy (but not a soup).
Allow to cook until chickpeas are hot.
Season to taste.
Serve with rice, taro, breadfruit, or any other starch and *finadene* relish.

Spam Fried Rice

Throughout the Pacific Islands (including Hawaii in the United States), canned corned beef or luncheon meat (Spam) is no longer used just as an alternative to fresh meat, but as a distinct ingredient on its own.

1 TBS oil
1 onion, minced fine
1 can Spam or canned corned beef, cubed
2 cups freshly cooked rice
soy sauce, salt, and pepper to taste

Heat oil in a wok.
Sauté onion until golden.
Add meat and brown lightly.
Add rice, stirring constantly to break up any lumps, and cook until warmed through.
Season with soy sauce, salt, and pepper.
Serve hot.

Microwave Mochi

A popular dessert that mixes Japanese festive food (*mochi*: sticky rice) with island coconut.

2 cups *mochikō* (sticky or glutinous rice flour, available in Asian stores)
1½ cups sugar
1 can coconut milk and water to equal 2¼ cups liquid

Whisk all ingredients together in a bowl or food processor.
Pour into a microwaveable dish. Cover, leaving room for steam to escape. Microwave (800 watts) on high for 12 minutes.
Slice and roll in cornstarch to keep from sticking.
Serve warm or cool as dessert or snack.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan, a South Asian country between India, Iran, and Afghanistan, comprises most of the Muslim provinces that had belonged to British (colonial) India. Broad plains, and mountains in the east, rising to the Himalayas in the north, grow a range of temperate and tropical crops.

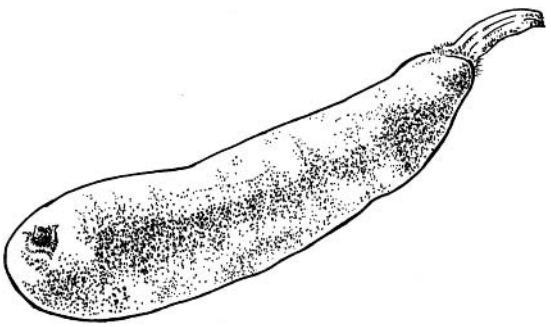
Several ethnic groups—Sind, Pathan, Baluch, Punjabis, and many more—make up the population. Most are farmers; some, in the southwestern deserts, are nomads. Pakistani food is similar to North Indian, though the Afghan and Iranian influence is far greater. Pork is not eaten and alcohol is forbidden, as virtually the entire population is Muslim.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, flat breads (many types generically called *nan*).
- Lamb, goat, beef, dairy products (yogurt, curd cheese).
- Eggplant, pumpkin, okra, bitter melon, gourds.
- Apricot, peach, plum, apple, melon, grape, banana.
- Seasonings: curry spices (cumin, coriander, turmeric), *garam masala* spice mix, chili pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Grilled or barbecued meats (kabab).
- Stews or curries of meat and vegetables (*aloo gosht* is stewed meat and potatoes).
- Sweets: milk-based, flour-based, and fruit- or nut-based.
- Drinks: sweet *lassi* (yogurt drink) with mango; salty *lassi* with cucumber.



GOURD

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: *nihari* (stewed beef) or eggs, flat bread (*nan* or *paratha*), mango, milky sweet

tea; *puri* (fried flat bread), curried potato or chickpeas, sweet semolina porridge with yogurt.
- Lunch: rice or flat bread, meat and vegetable curry, sweet or salty lassi.
- Dinner: rice or flat bread, grilled lamb kababs, vegetable curry, *ras goolay*.
- Snacks: vegetable fritters, flat bread, sweet pastries.

Meatballs (Koftay)

These meatballs are popularly made at home, and are also sold at street or market stalls. Serve with rice, chutney, and a salad for an evening meal.

Meatballs

1 pound ground beef
½ tsp salt
1 tsp *garam masala* spice mix
1 onion, minced
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 slice bread, soaked in ¼ cup milk or water to soften
1 TBS yogurt

Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
Shape into golf-sized balls. Refrigerate while making the sauce.

Sauce

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped fine
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp turmeric
2 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
½ cup yogurt
2 cups water
¼ cup cilantro, chopped (for garnish)

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat; fry onion until golden brown. Remove from oil and set aside.
Stir in the salt, turmeric, coriander, and ginger to the pan.
Add yogurt and water; let come to a boil.
Crumble fried onions into boiling sauce.
Add meatballs, reduce heat, cover, and simmer until done, for about 25–30 minutes.
Garnish with cilantro and serve.

Spiced Braised Meat (Nihari)

Nihari is a dish that requires long, slow cooking for best flavor. It is much appreciated for dinner, but any leftover is also welcomed at breakfast, when it is eaten with flat bread. A special kind of flat bread called *sheer mal*, which is slightly sweet with a waffle-like lattice design, is considered the best accompaniment for *nihari*. Other accompaniments are sliced lemons and fried onions. The large amount of oil is necessary for the right consistency. Ingredients such as the gram flour and green cardamoms are available from Indian specialty stores.

1 cup oil
2 onions, finely sliced
2 pounds goat meat or beef, cubed
5 cloves
2 bay leaves
2 cinnamon sticks, each about 1 inch long
5 cardamoms
2 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp red chili powder
salt to taste
½ tsp turmeric powder
3 TBS fresh grated ginger
3 TBS garlic, minced
⅔ cup plain yogurt, drained overnight
3 cups water
2 tsp flour
2 tsp gram flour
1 tsp *garam masala*
½ tsp green cardamom (available from South Asian stores)
½ tsp nutmeg powder
green chilies, ginger, and cilantro to garnish

Heat half the oil in a heavy saucepan; fry half the onions until dark golden.
Add meat, rest of the onions, cloves, bay leaves, cinnamon, and cardamoms.
When the meat mixture has absorbed all the liquid (from the onions), add coriander, red chilies, salt, and turmeric powder.
Add ginger and garlic to cooking meat and stir in well.
Add drained yogurt and stir. Cook until well absorbed. Add the water and simmer for 1 hour or more until the meat is tender.
Remove meat from the pan and set aside. Strain the broth and reserve.
Clean the pan used for cooking the meat, and heat the remaining oil. Make a paste by sprinkling the flour and gram flour over the oil, stirring constantly. Add a few tablespoons of the broth one tablespoon at a time, whisking or stirring constantly until the liquid is absorbed.
Add the rest of the broth, then the meat. Season to taste with *garam masala*, green cardamoms, nutmeg powder, and salt if necessary.
Cook for 8–10 minutes, until gravy is thickened to your liking. Remove from heat and serve with a garnish of fresh thinly sliced green chilies, ginger, and cilantro.
Serve with *nan*.

Stir-Fried Spicy Chicken (Jalfraizi)

This dish has a relatively recent history but has become a very popular dish for lunch or dinner. Serve with rice.

5 TBS oil
2 large onions (1 chopped, 1 sliced fine)
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 inch fresh ginger, grated
¼ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp coriander powder
4 large tomatoes (2 finely chopped, 2 sliced into wedges)
1½ pounds boneless chicken, cubed

(*continued*)

1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded and sliced into eighths
1 yellow bell pepper, cored, seeded and sliced into eighths
¼ tsp *garam masala* spice mix
salt to taste

Heat 3 tablespoons oil at medium heat in a wok.
Stir-fry chopped onions until softened.
Add garlic, ginger, turmeric, and coriander, frying for a few minutes.
Add chopped tomatoes; stir, cover wok and cook until tomatoes have softened.
Stir in chicken, mixing thoroughly; add salt to taste.
Let chicken cook for 10–15 minutes until tender.
Meanwhile, prepare the accompanying vegetables.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in another pan over medium-high heat.
Briskly stir-fry sliced onions, tomatoes, and peppers.
Sprinkle *garam masala* and a little salt over vegetables.
Do not overcook vegetables; turn off heat.
Quickly stir vegetables into chicken. Mix thoroughly.
Serve at once over rice.

Eggplant in Yogurt Sauce (Bengan ka Bhurta)

Eggplants are a common vegetable. Here they are roasted for a smoky flavor. Serve this dish with rice and a meat curry.

2 large whole eggplants, including stalks
4 TBS oil
1½ tsp cumin powder
¼ tsp chili powder (optional)
¼ tsp turmeric powder
5 stalks green onions, chopped
1 cup yogurt
1 green chili, cored, seeded, shredded (optional)
¼ cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
juice from 1 lime or ½ lemon
salt to taste

In a hot oven (400°F), roast the whole eggplants on a cookie sheet for about 30–45 minutes until the skins wrinkle and eggplant collapses in on itself.
When slightly cooled, slice eggplant lengthwise and scoop out flesh with a spoon. Chop flesh.
Heat oil in a frying pan or wok over low heat.
Stir in cumin, chili powder, and turmeric, frying for a few seconds.
Add onions and stir-fry until softened.
Stir in eggplant. Increase heat to medium-high and fry for a few minutes.
Add yogurt (and green chili if desired) and continue stir-frying until the mixture is dry.
Turn off heat.
Stir in mint leaves and citrus juice, and adjust seasoning.

Milk Balls (Ras Goolay, *also* Rasgula)

Rich and sweet milk-based confections are popular as snacks and desserts. The traditional method of making this is with whole milk boiled till reduced to the consistency of very thick cream. After meals, a betel nut and a tobacco paste mixture called pan are traditionally chewed.

2 cups ricotta, blended till smooth in blender or food processor (or mascarpone)
2 TBS rice flour
1½ cups sugar
3 or more cups water
½ cup pistachios, peeled and chopped, for garnish

Place ricotta or mascarpone in a colander or sieve, lined with a clean cheesecloth. Set inside a bowl to drain and place in the refrigerator for about 2 hours.
Mix rice flour well into drained cheese.
Roll cheese mixture into 1- to 2-inch balls. Place in the refrigerator to chill.
Fill a pot with about 3 inches water.
Add sugar and simmer to make a light syrup.
When syrup boils, gently slip in cheese balls.
Cook only a few at a time so that they do not stick.
Keep syrup just simmering.
If syrup becomes too thick, add a bit of hot water.
Let balls simmer for 10–15 minutes.
Remove from heat and let cool.
Serve cold with some syrup poured on top. Sprinkle each serving with chopped pistachios.

PALESTINE

Palestine is a country comprising the West Bank, a hilly area between Israel and the Jordan valley, and the Gaza Strip, a noncontiguous narrow strip of land along the Mediterranean Sea. The climate is hot and dry in the mountainous areas (though temperate in winter), hot and humid on the coast. A large variety of vegetables and fruit are grown. Citrus fruit thrive on the coastal strip. Wheat products, rice, vegetables, fruit, and fish from the coast make up the major food sources. Lamb, chicken, eggs, pickled olives, and other vegetables are important foods as well. Long occupation by Israel and disputes over territory have negatively affected the region's agriculture and economic and social stability.

The population is largely Arab Muslim with a dwindling Christian minority.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are largely wheat products (breads and pastas). Rice is imported and eaten for special occasions.
- Favorite meats are lamb and chicken, and beef.
- Fish, including bonito, shark, mullet, and bream from the Mediterranean.
- Vegetables: tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, onions, garlic, beans, pumpkins, and zucchini are very common and feature in most meals; wild greens.
- Fruit: grapes, figs, pomegranates, dates, olives, apples, strawberries.
- Dairy: milk (cow, ewe, and goat) and various milk products such as yogurt, *laban* (thickened yogurt), *samna* (clarified butter) are important.
- Pastries are very sweet, often made with nuts and cheese fillings.

Typical Dishes

- Salads and vegetables: *baba ghanoush* (eggplant dip); *falafel* (fried chickpea patties); *hummus bi tahina* (chickpea and sesame dip); *banadoora maqliya ma' thoom* (fried tomatoes); *m'tabbal* (eggplant and tahina), olives.
- Breads: pita (pocket bread); *marquq* (thin flat bread); *shrak* (whole-wheat thin griddle bread); *ka'ak* (pretzels).
- Main dishes: *musakhan* (chicken layered with bread, onions, and pine nuts); *fakhdet kharouf bel furun* (roast leg of lamb); *kefta* (spiced meatballs), *maqluba*

(rice and eggplant casserole); *mafghoussa* (mashed roast vegetables); *mjaddara* (rice and lentils).
- Snacks: *fotookh* (cheese-filled dumplings); *frikeh* (green wheat).
- Desserts and pastries: *eish es-saraya* (custard with pistachios); *knaffe* (shredded wheat with fruits and nuts); *katayef* (cheesecake).
- Flavor principles include spice mixes of cumin, coriander, a purple lemony spice called *sumac*, garlic, and onions. Olive oil, sesame sauce (*tahina*), and *samna* (ghee, or clarified butter) are used as flavors.
- Coffee and tea are popular drinks, both drunk sweet and without milk. Local and international soft drinks are very popular.

WILD MALLOW SHOOT

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Families generally prefer to eat the morning and evening meals together. Individual settings are common among townspeople, while villagers tend to share a central dish, eaten with the right hand.
- Breakfast: bread and dips (olive oil, hummus, *laban*); coffee or tea.
- Lunch: bread and salads (*baba ghanoush*, *falafel*, *hummus bi tahina*); a meat dish if possible; fruit; coffee.
- Evening meals: heavier meal with meat and rice dish; salads, soup in winter; dessert or fruit; coffee.
- Street vendors sell *tamarhindi* (tamarind drink, sour and slightly musty) and *suss* (a licorice-flavored drink). Coffee is the most important drink, drunk at all hours of the day, at home and in coffee shops, often with a sweet pastry.
- Eating out as a family treat, and by men, is a common feature of life.

Grilled Vegetable Paste (Mafghoussa)

Vegetables of all sorts accompany every meal. This dish can serve as the main dish for a light meal, or will accompany a meat dish in a heavier meal.

2 medium zucchini
1 hot green pepper, cored and seeded
1 onion
3 ripe tomatoes
3 cloves garlic
olive oil
salt to taste

Split the zucchini lengthwise, and cut the pepper and onion in half. Keep the tomatoes whole.

Place all the vegetables under the grill (or on the barbecue) until softened; do not worry if they are slightly charred (this adds to the flavor).

Peel the tomatoes, and mash (or puree in a blender or food processor) all the ingredients with the garlic, oil, and salt.

Eat on pita as a snack, or as sauce for barbecued meat, or a dip.

Wild Mallows (Khubbeizeh)

Mallows (*Malva sylvestris*) grow wild in temperate climates in the Middle East and Europe and have now spread to North America. They produce a small (¼-inch) green fruit that is edible as well and, when dried, can be ground into flour to make into a bread substitute. In this recipe, the fresh shoots are used.

1 pound tender *khubbeizeh* (or substitute spinach, chard, or kale)
1 TBS oil for frying
1 medium onion, finely chopped
salt to taste

Remove and discard bottom half of stalks if tough. Cut the remaining portions into 3-inch-long pieces, including leaves.
Heat oil in a lidded pan. Sauté onion until golden.
Add *khubbeizeh*. Stir on medium heat.
Add salt and cover the pot. Reduce heat. Cook for 5–10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Serve with *mafghoussa* and bread.

Eggplant with Tahina (M'tabbal)

This is often eaten as an appetizer or as a salad with flat bread.

2 large eggplants
¼ cup *tahina* (sesame sauce)
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup unflavored sour yogurt
2 garlic cloves, crushed and minced fine
salt and pepper to taste
olive oil
parsley, chopped fine for garnish

Wash and dry the eggplants without removing stems. Prick all over with fork.
Grill under high heat or over a naked flame. Holding the stems with tongs, turn occasionally till the skin is charred all over and the fruit has collapsed. Cool.
Meanwhile, mix the *tahina* with lemon juice, stirring continuously while adding 2 teaspoons water if necessary to obtain a soft paste. Add yogurt and garlic, mixing well.
Slit the eggplants lengthwise with a sharp knife. Drain brown juice, if any, and discard. Scoop flesh out with a spoon. Some burnt skin with the pulp adds to the smoky flavor.
Mash pulp, add seasoning and *tahina* mixture, mixing well.
Spread the resulting creamy paste on a wide plate; with the back of a spoon, make a circular groove all round.

Decorate the edges with parsley.
Pour some olive oil into the groove just before serving.

Chicken in Sumac (Musakhan)

This is a typical, perhaps the most typical, Palestinian dish (though Jordanians argue it is theirs originally).

1 cup vegetable oil
6 large onions (1 minced, 4 chopped, 1 finely sliced)
1 chicken, cut into 4–6 pieces
1 TBS allspice
salt and pepper to taste
water to cover
2 bay leaves
4 cardamom pods
1 piece flat bread per person
1 TBS or more sumac (purple powdered dried fruit of the sumac bush. Has a tangy, lemony flavor)

Heat 1 tablespoon oil and fry the minced onion until golden.
Add chicken and brown slightly, adding allspice, and salt and pepper to taste.
Cover with water, add bay leaves and cardamom, and cook until tender, about 30 minutes.
Meanwhile in a separate pan, deep-fry the chopped onions in remaining oil until golden. Remove, drain, and reserve.
Remove the chicken from the broth and place in an ovenproof dish.
Mix well with the sliced onion, a tablespoon of oil from frying the onions, and season with salt, pepper, and sumac.
Grill or broil in the oven until brown but still moist.
Spread the fried onions (with some oil) evenly on bread.
Arrange chicken over the onions. Sprinkle with more sumac.
Serve hot with yogurt and salad.

Jerusalem Cheese Vermicelli Dessert (Kadayif al Khouds)

This is considered the specialty of Old Jerusalem, though its origins are probably Turkish.

1 cup sugar
¾ cup water
1 TBS fresh lemon juice
½ cup seedless golden raisins
1 tsp grated lemon rind
½ cup water
1 pound light cream cheese or fresh goat cheese, drained in cheesecloth-lined colander
½ pound *kataifi* (dry vermicelli; available from Middle Eastern stores)
½ cup butter, melted

(*continued*)

Warm oven to 350°F.
Put sugar, water, and lemon juice into a pot and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Set syrup aside to cool.
In a separate saucepan, warm the raisins and lemon rind in ½ cup water and let stand for a few minutes for raisins to plump. Coarsely chop raisins and set aside. Reserve the liquid.
Beat or whisk drained cheese. Stir in raisins, adding some of the raisin liquid to make a soft and easily spreadable mix.
Loosen *kataifi* threads in a large bowl. Toss threads gently with melted butter to coat.
Arrange half of the coated threads in the bottom of a 9×12-inch baking dish and top with cheese mixture.
Place remaining *kataifi* evenly over top, pressing them lightly into cheese mixture.
Bake covered with foil for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 30 minutes or until *kadayif* is crisp and golden.
Drizzle with sugar syrup.
Serve warm with glasses of cold water and coffee.

PANAMA

Panama is strategically located in the narrowest part of Central America, with coasts on the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. A Spanish colony for three centuries and then part of Colombia, it gained independence in 1903 as a result of U.S. desire to construct the Panama Canal. Tropical climate along the coastal plains and cooler mountains helps in the production of bananas, rice, corn, coffee, sugarcane, vegetables, and livestock. Plentiful fish and seafood are exported.

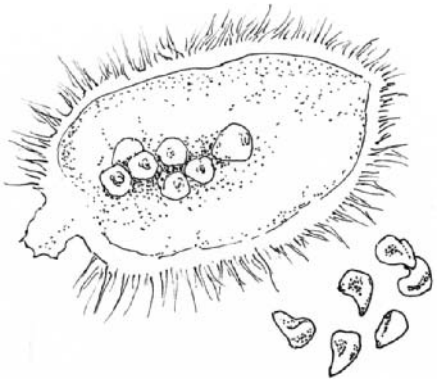
Panamanian food reflects its mixed culture that combines Spanish and other European, native Amerindian, East Indian, Chinese, and Afro-Caribbean influences. Despite being strongly influenced by Spanish and North American culture (particularly in fast food), Panama still has indigenous Amerindian minorities, such as the Embera and Cuna, who maintain their traditional way of life. While Spanish is the official language, Creole English is spoken by the Afro-Caribbean minority.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, beans, plantain, cassava.
- Pork, chicken, turkey, sea bass (*corvina*), red snapper (*pargo rojo*), lobster, king fish, shrimp, cheese, eggs.
- Corn, pumpkin, cabbage, yam, sweet potato, taro.
- Banana, pineapple, mango.
- Seasonings: cilantro and *culantro* (a large leaf–type cilantro), achiote (natural red food coloring), *chombo* chili pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes: chicken and rice (*arroz con pollo*) is one of the two national dishes. Rice and pigeon peas (*arroz con guandu*) is a common side dish at lunch or dinner.
- Spanish-style substantial soups and stews of meat and vegetables (e.g., *sancocho*, also regarded as the national dish).
- Marinated sea bass (*ceviche de corvina*) or other sea food, in lime juice and onions.
- Caribbean dishes: pig's trotters flavored with lime and chilies (*saos*, from "souse"), stewed fish with plantains and other vegetables in coconut milk (*fufu*), roast wild game (e.g., *agouti*, here called *conejo pintado*).



ACHIOTE

- Snacks: fried cassava and meat rolls (*carimañolas*); savory turnovers (*empanadas*); steamed corn dumplings (*tamales*); fried plantains (*patacones*); hamburgers; hot dogs.
- Drinks: coffee; sweet fizzy drinks (sodas); cold fresh tropical fruit juices (called *chichas*; in other parts of Panama, *chicha* refers to fermented drinks); mango, pineapple, and other tropical fruit milkshakes often made with ice cream (*batidas*); fresh coconut juice (*pipa*) drunk directly from the green "nut" with a straw. Beer and rum are locally brewed.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: a combination of fried foods (*fritura*), including sausages, eggs, green plantains, corn tortillas (smaller and thicker than elsewhere in Central America), and doughnuts (*hojaldres*); coffee.
- Lunch: heaviest meal of the day, consisting of *sancocho* or other substantial meat dish, rice, beans, and fruit.
- Supper: light meal of soup and bread, fruit.
- Snacks are eaten in the mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

Papaya-Pineapple Drink (Chicha de Papaya con Piña)

Fresh tropical fruit juices are commonly drunk with meals. You may substitute ripe mango or fresh pineapple for the papaya.

1 ripe papaya, diced
1 cup pineapple juice
juice from 1 large lemon or 2 limes
1 cup peach or apricot nectar
2 cups ginger ale (or fizzy lime or lemon drink)
ice cubes

Blend fruits and juices in a blender or food processor.
Add ginger ale or other fizzy drink, and mix well.
Pour into individual glasses with ice cubes.
Serve very cold.

Rice and Chicken (Arroz con Pollo)

This is ubiquitous all over Panama and is considered a national dish. The Spanish colonial legacy has made this a common dish throughout all of Latin America, but each country's rice and chicken dish is distinctive. This Panamanian dish features olives, capers, and green peas and is often served as a main dish with fried plantains and tortillas for lunch.

4 large chicken portions (quarter, leg, or breast)
1 onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
salt to taste
water as needed
2 TBS oil
1 tsp achiote spice (or substitute 1 TBS paprika, 2 cloves minced garlic, ½ tsp dried oregano, ½ tsp ground cumin, 1 TBS vinegar)
2 cups rice, rinsed and drained
2 carrots, diced
½ cup whole pitted green olives
2 TBS capers (optional)
¼ cup raisins
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
½ cup frozen peas, thawed and drained
cilantro, chopped

Place chicken with half the onion, half the bell pepper, salt, and 3 cups water in a covered saucepan.
Cover and bring to a boil over medium heat.
Reduce heat and simmer for 25–30 minutes until chicken is tender. Set aside to cool.
Drain chicken, reserving the broth, and shred meat. Set aside.
Strain the broth and add water to make 4 cups. Set aside.
In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat oil with achiote spice or substitute.
Stir in remaining onion and bell pepper and cook until softened.
Stir in rice, carrots, olives, capers, raisins, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and the 4 cups of broth. Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to lowest setting and continue cooking until rice is done, for about 20–25 minutes. When the rice is done, stir in peas and chicken. Let rest for 10–15 minutes before serving.
Garnish with cilantro and serve.

Chicken and Vegetable Stew
(Sancocho)

This is another very commonly eaten dish, rivaling *arroz con pollo* as the national dish. A meal in itself with starchy root vegetables, *sancocho* is commonly eaten at midday as a main dish with rice and fried plantains. Serve also with tortillas, or rice and beans.

4 large chicken portions (quarters or legs)
1 onion, chopped
4 TBS cilantro, chopped
1 tsp dried oregano leaves
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
water as needed
1 pound true yams (*ñame*), peeled and chunked (available in Hispanic stores, or substitute potatoes)
1 fresh young corn on the cob, cut into 2-inch pieces (optional)
salt to taste

(*continued*)

Into a covered saucepan, put chicken, onion, cilantro, oregano, bell pepper, and 4 cups water.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 25 minutes, or until the chicken is almost done.
Add salt to taste and stir in *ñame*. Cook until tender, about 20 minutes.
Stir in corn for the last 10 minutes of cooking.

Cassava Fritters (Carimañolas)

Also called *enyucados*, these savory fritters are a common snack, sold in the streets. They can also serve as an appetizer for lunch or as a light meal with a salad for supper (see box "Cassava/Yuca or Yucca in the Americas").

1 pound cassava or potatoes, peeled and boiled
2 TBS oil
½ pound ground beef
1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
½ cup onion, finely chopped
½ cup tomato, finely chopped
salt, pepper, and Tabasco (optional) to taste
1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
oil for deep-frying

Mash the cassava (or potatoes), discarding any hard cores.
In a skillet over medium heat, heat oil and brown the beef.
Stir in the pepper, onion, tomato, salt, pepper, and Tabasco.
Cook until all the vegetables are very tender and the tomato juices have been absorbed by the meat.
Turn off heat.
Stir in the egg.
With moistened hands, take 2 tablespoons of mashed cassava and shape into a ball.
Press the ball flat into an oval.
Place 1 tablespoon of meat mixture in the center and enclose it with the mashed cassava. Shape into a 3- to 4-inch roll.
Heat at medium heat enough oil for deep-frying (about 2–3 inches) in a deep skillet.
Fry the fritters a few at a time to keep the oil at an even temperature.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve warm.

Candied Plantain (Tentación)

Plantains are a versatile and common food item, used both while green and when ripe. Although this dish is sweet, it is actually intended as an accompaniment to main courses. However, it can make a simple but tempting dessert or snack, as its name implies.

1 TBS butter or margarine
1 TBS oil
2 large ripe plantains, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
⅔ cup sugar
1 cup water
½ tsp vanilla
½ tsp cinnamon

In a large skillet, melt butter and oil at medium-high heat.
Add plantains, a few at a time, and fry until brown, turning over to brown all sides.
Set aside the fried plantains.
When all the plantains have been fried, return them to the skillet.
Bring the sugar and water to a boil in a separate pot and cook until the sugar is dissolved and has turned a light caramel color.
Pour the light syrup over the plantains in the skillet.
Place on medium heat, and cook, stirring constantly, until the syrup has caramelized, for about 15 minutes. Take care that the caramel does not burn.
Immediately turn off heat.
Stir in the vanilla and cinnamon.
Serve warm.

CASSAVA/YUCA OR YUCCA IN THE AMERICAS

Cassava, a crop that originated in tropical America, has become an important starch crop all over the tropics. The wild starchy root has been collected by people since prehistorical times. In the wild, the cassava root and leaves often have a high concentration of cyanide, a deadly poison (in the form of cyanogenic glucosides). This is traditionally extracted by grating the raw root, rinsing it to get rid of the poison, and drying the solids. Modern varieties of cassava have less of this substance, which is eliminated by cooking. Cassava is particularly important because it normally has high yields in the tropics, is well resistant to pests, provides more energy than any other root crop per acre, and both the tubers and the leaves can be eaten. It was brought to Africa by the Portuguese who wanted a cheap, nutritious food for the slaves they were purchasing in West Africa.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

An island nation in Oceania, on the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, Papua New Guinea (PNG) was controlled by Germany and the UK from 1885 and administered by Australia until independence in 1975. The island has a warm tropical climate throughout, favoring cultivation of coconuts and sweet potatoes. The cooler highlands raise coffee and tea. The coastline is lined with coconut and other palms such as sago. Rain during the rainy season can be constant. The islands are mostly covered by tropical jungle.

There are over 600 ethnic groups, some only recently developed beyond stone-age technology: Papuan, Melanesian, Micronesian, and Polynesian. Papua New Guineans grow a range of fruits and vegetables in home gardens. Pigs are significant in all local cultures: as food, for rituals, and as gifts, where pigs are exchanged between powerful leaders or between villages. World War II introduced many to Western and manufactured foods for the first time, in the form of military rations dropped by cargo planes. Spices and breads were introduced by Australians. Some dishes are influenced by neighboring Polynesian and Melanesian islands.

Foodstuffs

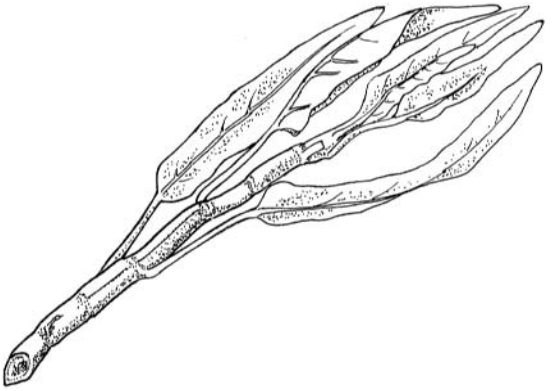
- Staples (depending on region): taro, various yams (*Dioscorea* species), cassava, sweet potato, sago; rice (not traditional) now widely eaten as staple.
- Meat: beef, pork, chicken, wild game (turtle, wild cassowary, tree kangaroo, snake), corned beef (called bully beef).
- Fish (tuna, perch, various fish), seafood (clams, shrimp, crab, lobster).
- Many kinds of edible greens, collectively called *kumu*, grown in back gardens, bought or collected from the wild: *aibika* (hibiscus) leaves, *oka* fern, Indian spinach, pumpkin tips (shoots), sweet potato shoots, taro leaves, water spinach. Also, Chinese cabbage, cabbage, potato, wild mushrooms, unripe breadfruit.
- Coconut, avocado, papaya, mango, ripe breadfruit, citrus (pomelo, tangerines, lemon), exotic tropical fruits (rambutan, starfruit, custard apple), peanuts, pandanus fruit, *okari* nuts.
- Western-style breads, rolls, cakes.
- Seasonings: coconut milk, salt, lemon leaves (traditional); contemporary: curry powder, chili, tomato, onion, garlic, ginger, oregano, basil, other herbs.

Typical Dishes

- Cooking and ingredients vary by region: foods are categorized as staples, main dishes (*abus*: yams, sweet potatoes, sago), and edible greens (*kumu*). In some communities, only two of these categories may be cooked together in the same pot; others are less strict and cook all three together. This restriction does not apply to earth-oven cookery.
- Contemporary dishes use curry powder, herbs, and other spices.
- Meat, poultry, fish, turtle, seafood, and/or vegetables stewed in coconut milk, mud clam with tender fern leaves from Milne Bay (typical of coastal cooking, now spread to highlands).
- Charcoal-grilled pork, chicken, wild game.
- Fish and seafood "cooked" in lemon juice (*kokoda*).
- *Mumu* (earth oven) dishes: vegetables (sweet potatoes, taro, yams, cassava, greens), chicken and/or pork are slowly baked for hours in a big hole dug in the ground, lined with heated rocks and banana leaves, into which food is arranged in layers. Thick coconut milk is lavishly poured over all. Oven is sealed with banana leaves and soil. Now, huge discarded fuel drums are cleaned and used as ovens to bake scones and rolls for retail sales; electric/gas ovens and stoves are also now used at home with metal pots and pans.
- Hibiscus (*aibika*) leaf, various greens (wild and cultivated), and flower buds cooked in coconut milk for vegetable stews.
- Drinks: water, coconut milk, tea, coffee, cocoa, lemonade, fresh fruit juices, home-brewed palm, and banana wine, imported Australian beer, international bottled soft drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Traditionally, two meals daily and snacks. In most communities, any meal without the staple is considered a snack.
- Western-style eating with utensils now becoming common.
- In some communities, men and women live, cook, and eat separately. Women and young children eat in their own houses. Men live and eat in all-male dormitories, getting cooked food from their mothers or wives. Food is eaten with the fingers, from a common pot.
- Breakfast: light meal, of boiled or roasted sweet potatoes, yams, or cassava; or left-overs from evening meal.
- Lunch: not traditionally eaten; now light sandwiches or snack items such as pies are eaten in towns.
- Dinner: main, heavy meal of rice or other staple root, fish or beef (chicken and pork are more expensive), green vegetables in coconut milk.
- Snacks: baked goods in larger towns, ripe fruits, nuts.
- In the capital city, Port Moresby, Australian/Western-style foods and other foreign (Japanese) foods are served in hotels, bars, and restaurants.



WATER SPINACH

Baked Sweet Potato

This is eaten at most meals.

3 cups cooked mashed sweet potato
4 TBS butter, melted
3 TBS finely sliced onions
1 TBS milk
½ tsp ground cinnamon
salt and pepper to taste
3 eggs, separated

Mix mashed potato with 3 tablespoons butter, onion, milk, cinnamon, salt, and pepper.
Beat the yolks and add to potato mixture.
Beat the egg whites to soft peaks and fold into the potato mixture.
Place the mixture in a greased baking dish set in a larger pan with warm water.
Brush the top of the mixture with remaining butter.
Bake in a 350°F oven for 30–40 minutes, or until nicely browned.
Serve hot.

Sago Dumpling with Fish

This is a traditional dish from the Central District. It was served to elders as a mark of respect (see box "Sago").

1 firm white-fleshed fish, scaled, head removed, cut in half
1 onion, chopped
1 lemon, rind grated, and its juice
2-inch piece fresh ginger, chopped
1 chili pepper
water to cover
1 cup sago pearls (tapioca)
2 cups coconut milk
salt to taste

Place the fish, chopped onion, ginger, chili, and water in a pot and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and continue simmering until fish is cooked but still firm, for about 10–15 minutes, depending on the size of the fish.
Remove bones, cut up fish into serving pieces, and set aside. Do not discard fish stock.
Place sago into a large mixing bowl. Break up any large lumps with your fingers.
Add 1 cup coconut milk to the sago and mix until well blended.
Form sago-coconut mixture into golf-ball-sized balls.
Bring reserved fish stock to a boil.
Drop sago-coconut balls into the boiling stock. Reduce heat and simmer for 10–15 minutes. (Sago becomes gluey if cooked for a long time. Many prefer this, so cook longer if desired.) Remove cooked balls and keep warm.

Add lemon juice, rind, and the remaining coconut milk to the simmering stock.
Season with salt to taste.
Serve sago balls in a bowl with the soup, with the fish on a separate plate.

Chicken Pot

This dish is intended for a main course for an evening meal, to be served with boiled potatoes or rice. Alternatively, the coconut milk can be diluted with water to make enough soup for four, and the vegetables and meat can be served as a separate course.

2 TBS oil
4 portions chicken, quarters, breasts, or whole legs (including thighs)
1 cup green onions, chopped
1 tsp curry powder
salt to taste
3 cups coconut milk
2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 fresh corn cobs, cut into 2-inch pieces (or 2 cups corn kernels)
2 cups pumpkin tips (tender young leaves) or Chinese cabbage, sliced into 2-inch pieces

Heat oil in a saucepan, over medium heat.
Brown the chicken pieces a few at a time, about 5 or more minutes on each side. Set aside.
Fry the green onions briefly in the remaining oil.
Stir in curry powder and salt.
Pour in coconut milk and mix well.
Return chicken to the pan.
Add sweet potatoes and corn cobs or kernels.
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 30–40 minutes, stirring occasionally and checking that the bottom is not burning.
During the last 10 minutes of cooking, add pumpkin tips or cabbage.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot.

SAGO

Sago is a starch derived from the sago palm (*Metroxylon sagu*), a tropical palm common in Oceania, Asia, and South America. To make sago, a palm is felled and its inner pith scraped out. The pith is crushed, then rinsed in plenty of water. The water is collected and the starch allowed to settle. It is then removed and dried. Sago is the major staple in lowland Melanesia. It is eaten as a porridge, or baked into loaves. Pearl tapioca is a commercial product derived from sago.

Kokoda *Fish*

This form of cooking is also known as *ceviche* in South America and is a common method for fish and seafood in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and other Pacific Islands. The chemical action of the acid in the citrus juice "cooks" the fish.

1 cup lime juice
1 pound very fresh skinless fish fillets, cut into ½-inch cubes
1 clove garlic, crushed
½ cup coconut milk
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and sliced
1 onion, sliced thin
1 cucumber, sliced thin
1 firm tomato, sliced thin

Pour juice over fish and mix well in a glass bowl.
Cover and refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours, turning from time to time with a wooden spoon.
Remove fish. Drain and discard juice.
Mix garlic with coconut milk.
Divide fish into four bowls and pour the coconut milk over the fish.
Garnish with eggs, onion, cucumber, and tomato slices.
Serve with baked breadfruit and baked bananas.

Bully Beef and Rice Casserole

Papuans were introduced to bully beef (canned corned beef) from the packed rations of soldiers during World War II. Lemon rind is used as a substitute for lemon leaf, a traditional flavoring. Serve with watercress or spinach parboiled or stir-fried with ginger, garlic, and salt for an evening meal.

3 cups plain cooked rice
1 8-ounce can corned beef, chopped
5 tomatoes, chopped
grated rind of 1 lemon
2 cups coconut milk
salt to taste

In the bottom of an 8×8-inch baking dish, spread half the rice evenly.
Mix corned beef and tomatoes; spoon over rice.
Sprinkle half of the lemon rind over.
Pour in 1 cup coconut milk.
Add a final layer of rice.
Sprinkle the remaining lemon rind, then the rest of the coconut milk. Sprinkle salt to taste, if desired (the corned beef is salty enough, so salt may not be necessary).
Bake at 375°F until hot and bubbling, for about 25–30 minutes.

Yam Patties

Various root crops—yams, sweet potato, taro, and tree starches such as sago or tapioca—are eaten on the islands. This recipe can use any of those. This is served with roast meat or fish, and green vegetables.

3 cups boiled yam (true yam *Dioscorea*; or mix of sweet potato, taro, cassava, or sago), cooled and mashed
1 egg, beaten
2 tsp onion, grated
2 tsp parsley, chopped fine
salt and pepper to taste
flour
4 TBS vegetable oil

Mix mashed yam with egg, onion, parsley, salt and pepper.
With moistened hands, form into eight patties.
Roll each patty in flour.
Heat the oil over medium heat, and fry the patties, without crowding the pan, till golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Banana Pancakes

Western-style baked goods such as rolls, bread, cakes, and scones were introduced by Australians and are now commonly eaten, either made at home or bought from snack shops.

2 cups self-rising flour
¼ tsp baking soda
1 cup milk
2 TBS honey
4 ounces butter (2 ounces melted)
3 very ripe bananas, mashed
1 ripe banana and honey for garnish

Sift flour and baking soda together.
In a blender or food processor, combine milk, honey, and melted butter.
Add flour and blend until smooth.
Add mashed bananas and mix thoroughly.
Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat.
Grease with a film of butter.
Pour 2–3 spoonfuls of the mixture onto the hot skillet.
When bubbles start to appear in the batter, flip over and cook the other side.
Repeat until all the batter is finished. Keep the finished pancakes warm in the oven while the rest are being made.
Garnish with a few slices of banana and a drizzle of honey and serve.

Banana Sago Dumplings (Saksak)

These are served as snacks or as a side dish with a main meal.

2 cups sago or tapioca pearls
3 very ripe bananas, mashed
8 sheets of aluminum foil, 10×10 inches
water for boiling
2 cups coconut milk

Combine the sago or tapioca and mashed bananas into a stiff mixture, adding more sago or tapioca if necessary.
Place 3 heaping spoonfuls of the mixture in the middle of the foil squares.
To get rectangular dumplings: wrap the mixture securely by bringing together the top and bottom edges, folding together several times.
Fold the left and right sides separately several times, sealing securely so that water will not get into the sealed package.
Place a big pot of water to boil.
Drop the wrapped dumplings into boiling water; let boil for 15–20 minutes.
Take the boiled wrapped dumplings out of the water and let cool for 5–10 minutes, until cool enough to handle.
In another pot wide enough to take all the dumplings, heat the coconut milk.
Unwrap the dumplings and put into the simmering coconut milk.
Let cook for about 10 minutes, until heated through.

PARAGUAY

A landlocked South American country surrounded by Argentina, Bolivia, and Brazil, Peru has a temperate climate east of the Paraguay River and a semiarid one to the west of it. Its fertile plains favor the production of sugarcane, soybeans, corn, wheat, cassava, fruits, vegetables, pork, poultry, and eggs. Grasslands support cattle raising and milk products. Paraguay is the original home of *yerba mate* and grows most of what is drunk throughout South America.

A Spanish colony until independence in 1811, Paraguay's population is made up of people of Amerindian and Spanish descent, as well as German and Italian settlers, who have influenced the local cuisine with pasta and *osso buco*.

Foodstuffs

- Staples are maize and cassava (manioc). Almost all meals will have one or both of these in some form.
- Pork, beef, chicken and other poultry, eggs, cheese.
- Fish: *surubi*, *dorado*, and fresh-water shrimp from the Amazon and other rivers; rhea (an ostrich relative) and its eggs are distinctive food items.
- Hearts of palm are an exotic item in salads.

Typical Dishes

- Cheese and corn are common combinations: cornmeal and cheese in a cake-like bread (*sopa paraguaya*); cornmeal-cheese dumplings in soup, with or without meat; corn kernels and cheese baked in a casserole; a common bread called *chipá*, baked or fried from cornmeal or cassava flour and cheese.
- Stews of meat chunks, corn on the cob, zucchini, and cassava (*locro*) are popular.
- Grilled assorted meats (pork, beef, lamb), sausages, poultry and fish, accompanied by cassava or corn breads, salad, vegetables, and pasta are popular.
- Drinks: chilled fresh sugarcane juice. *Yerba mate* is a common hot drink (see box, "Yerba Mate"). In summer, it is chilled and mixed with other herbs to make a stimulating and refreshing drink called *tereré*, which also has medicinal qualities. *Tereré* is often shared as a sign of friendship. The container that is passed around is called *guampa*, usually made of cow horn and adorned with silver. A metal straw is used to prevent leaves from being drunk. *Guarana*, a caffeine-rich soft drink originally from Brazil.

YERBA MATE EQUIPMENT: GUAMPA (CONTAINER) AND METAL STRAW

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- Breakfast: *sopa paraguaya* and coffee or mate.
- Lunch: *locro*, bread, beer or juice, coffee.
- Evening meals: *carne asada* (mixed grilled meats), pasta, salad.

Corn-Cheese Bread (Sopa Paraguaya)

This is a very common food that may appear at any meal, and is necessary for some to feel that they have really eaten. Contrary to its local name, it is not a soup.

1½ cups boiling water
1 cup cornmeal
2 TBS butter or margarine, softened
3 eggs, separated
½ cup milk
½ cup cottage cheese
1 tsp salt
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp ground cumin
⅛ tsp ground allspice
⅛ tsp ground red pepper
1 8-ounce can whole-kernel corn, drained
1 cup shredded cheddar or Monterey jack cheese
1 small onion, chopped

Preheat oven to 375°F.
Stir boiling water into cornmeal in a large bowl; continue stirring until smooth.
Blend in butter and egg yolks.
Stir in remaining ingredients except egg whites.
Beat egg whites just until soft peaks form, and fold into batter.
Pour into greased 2-quart casserole.
Bake until knife inserted at the center comes out clean (for 45–50 minutes).

Chickpea and Spinach Soup (Potaje de Garbanzo con Acelga)

This is commonly eaten for lunch or supper.

2 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 can chickpeas, drained
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 bay leaf
paprika, salt, and pepper to taste
1 cup frozen spinach, thawed, drained, and chopped
2 TBS lemon juice
2 TBS parsley, chopped

Heat oil over medium heat in a stewing pot.
Stir-fry onion and garlic until softened.
Stir in chickpeas, tomatoes, bay leaf, paprika, salt, and pepper.
Add 6 cups water; cover, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Turn off heat.
Take out tomato peels and bay leaf and discard.
Reserve 2 tablespoons whole chickpeas for garnish, and puree the remainder with the stewed vegetables and broth in a food processor or blender.
Return pureed mixture to saucepan.
Stir in spinach and lemon juice.
Correct seasoning and let simmer for 5 minutes.
Garnish with parsley and the reserved whole chickpeas before serving.

YERBA MATE

Yerba mate is a very popular hot drink in Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and other Latin American countries. To enjoy *mate*, one needs *yerba*, a *mate*, and a *bombilla*. *Yerba* is the herb leaves, *mate* is the container, usually a gourd or wooden cup, where the *yerba* is placed, and the *bombilla* is a metal straw through which to drink the tea and which also prevents the leaves from being drunk. *Yerba mate* can either be drunk alone or with a group of friends, with the *mate* being passed around for sharing. Novice drinkers may find *yerba mate* bitter, but after a few attempts it can become quite addicting. *Yerba* leaves are high in caffeine and medicinal value, and are claimed to be excellent for the digestion.

Meat-Cassava Patties (Payagua Mascada)

This is a quick nourishing dish utilizing a common Amerindian staple.

2 TBS olive oil
1 small onion, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 cups ground beef
1 tsp salt
1 tsp cumin
2 cups mashed cassava or potato
2 TBS cornstarch
4 TBS oil

In a frying pan over medium heat, heat the oil and stir-fry the onion until soft.
Add garlic, and then beef, stirring until meat has changed color. Season with salt and cumin.
Turn off heat.
Mix the mashed cassava or potato and cornstarch well with the meat mixture.
Form into patties and shallow fry a few at a time in hot oil.

Squash Mash (Kiveve)

This can be served as a side dish for meat.

1 acorn squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
2 cups water
2 TBS olive oil
1 onion, minced
½ cup milk
¼ tsp salt
½ TBS sugar
1 cup cornmeal
¼ pound white farmer's cheese (or other soft, crumbly cheese)

Boil squash in water till tender, for about 10–15 minutes (or microwave). Drain squash and reserve the water.
In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat and brown the onion.
Add squash, milk, salt, sugar, and the reserved water from cooking the squash.
Gradually stir in cornmeal a little at a time, continuing to stir for 10 minutes or until done.
Turn off heat and stir in cheese.
Serve as a side dish with barbecued or roast meat or with meat patties (see the previous recipe).

Orange Custard (Flan de Naranja)

This is a variation on a common favorite South American dessert.

4 egg yolks
3 TBS sugar
1 TBS cornstarch
grated rind from 4 oranges
2 cups hot milk
2 TBS butter
4 oranges
4 TBS sugar (if desired)
cinnamon to taste

Mix egg yolks, sugar, cornstarch, and grated rind in a pan. Stir in hot milk.
Put pan over low heat. Continue to stir until mixture thickens, for about 15–20 minutes.
Take off heat. Stir in butter so that skin does not form on the custard. Occasionally stir while the custard is cooling.
Peel the oranges and separate into sections. Place in a bowl.
Sprinkle with sugar, if using. Sprinkle cinnamon over the oranges.
Spoon custard over oranges.
Cover with plastic wrap and chill for ½ hour or more.
To serve, dust with a bit more cinnamon.

PERU

Peru is the third largest country in South America and faces the South Pacific Ocean. Because of its varied terrain from lowland coastal plains to Andean highlands, Peru's climate ranges from tropical on the coast to very cold in the mountains. The ocean is chilled by a current that makes the waters very fertile, with masses of anchovy-like fish, flying fish, bonito, and tuna. The jungle provides many varieties of fish, small game, river turtles, fruits, and nuts.

Like other South American countries, Peru was a Spanish colony until independence in 1824. Peru's ethnic mix consists of Amerindians, mixed Spanish-Amerindians, Europeans, Japanese, and other groups. The ancient Peruvians worshipped the sun, so yellow is a favorite food color, imparted through *palillo*, a common cooking ingredient.

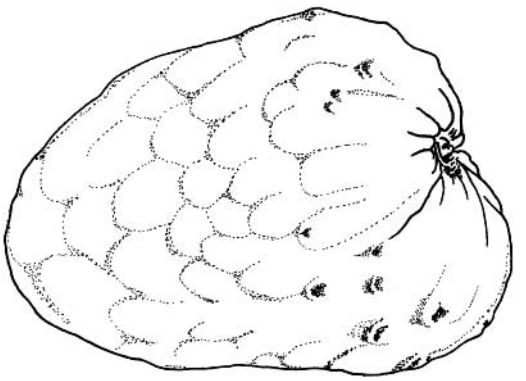
Foodstuffs

- Staples: the Andes are home to many varieties of potato and other unique food crops like the *oca* tuber and grain-like *quinoa*.
- Meat: *cuy* (guinea pig), lamb, pork, and beef, as well as dried meat (*charqui*) are eaten, especially for celebrations; chicken and turkey.
- Fish: sea fish and seafood (crustaceans and shellfish).
- Vegetables: sweet potatoes, maize, rice, and plantains, depending on locality and particularly altitude. Also tomatoes, cucumbers, Lima beans, hot peppers.
- Fruit: lowland and tropical fruit including papaya, melons, coconut, starfruit, grapes, oranges, sugarcane, pineapples, peanuts.
- Dairy: cheese from both cows and sheep.

Typical Dishes

- Typical foods vary by region: usually, Spanish stews using local ingredients; traditional Amerindian dishes; Italian-style pasta; Japanese ways with seafood; and Chinese-style stir-fried foods.
- In the countryside, people chiefly eat potatoes, beans, corn, cassava, squash made into stews or soups with barley, wheat, and cheese. Most upper- and middle-class families in urban Peru eat meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, and cereal products. Rice, potatoes, bread, fruit juices, and bottled drinks accompany most meals.

- A national favorite is grilled beef hearts with garlic, peppers, cumin, and vinegar.
- Stews feature chicken, pork, beef, or fish, served with rice, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, and hot peppers.
- Typical coastal dishes: marinated fresh or fried fish and seafood, fish or shellfish soups or stews, with or without seaweed and rice.
- Northern favorites: roast lamb or baby goat with rice, spicy creamed chicken or duck, savory corn or rice pastries with meat wrapped in palm or banana leaves (*juanes*).
- For celebrations, the Amerindian traditional clambake (*pachamanca*)—featuring forty ingredients, usually three kinds of meat (pork, lamb, chicken, or guinea pig), fruits, and vegetables (2 kinds of potato, beans, other tubers, banana, carrots)—is prepared. It is eaten with a sauce called *qapchi* made of herbs, lemon, seaweed, and cheese.



CUSTARD APPLE

- Desserts and sweets: Spanish-influenced custards; purple corn pudding with spices and dried fruits—a typical Lima drink/dessert; deep-fried cassava and sweet potatoes, anise-flavored and served hot with powdered sugar; cassava flour fritters in honey; local fruit ice cream, with eggfruit (*lucuma*), custard apple, quince, passion fruit, and soursop; *tejas* ("roof tiles"), made of dried lemon, figs, or pecans, served with caramelized milk sauce; King-Kong sweet—layers of various sweets, including caramelized milk; cinnamon-flavored cakes filled with caramelized milk fudge.
- Flavorings include several kinds of hot pepper, including *rocoto* (a large bell pepper), annatto seeds for flavor and red color, and a marigold-like herb.
- Drinks include local Inca Cola, herbal teas (especially *maté*), purple corn and fruit juice. Wine and other alcoholic drinks are made from grapes, cassava juice, sugar cane, cherries.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: eggs, bread, fruit, coffee.
- Lunch is the main meal, usually with three or more courses.
- Dinner is taken around 8 p.m.
- Snacks are eaten in between times. Afternoon snack of open sandwiches around 5 p.m.

Bean Fritters (Tacu Tacu)

Serve with Creole sauce (see recipe below) as a first course or snack. Large *tacu tacu* are commonly served with steak or roast meat in restaurants.

2 cups cooked kidney or navy beans, drained
1 TBS olive oil
6 strips bacon, diced
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 cup cooked rice
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp chili powder
salt to taste
1 cup bread crumbs
frying oil

Mash or puree beans in a food processor. Set aside.
Heat oil in a large skillet, and fry bacon until browned. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons fat. Sauté onion and garlic until soft.
Stir in beans, rice, and spices. Check seasoning, as the bacon may make salt unnecessary.
Cook until heated through. Remove from heat and let cool.
Divide the mixture into four portions, and shape each with moistened hands into a patty.
Roll in bread crumbs. Chill for 30 minutes.
Pour 1 inch of oil in a skillet, and heat over medium heat.
Fry the *tacu tacu* until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels.
Keep warm in a low oven until serving.
Best eaten hot.

Pork and Potato Stew (Carapulcra)

This main meal stew is traditionally made with freeze-dried potatoes, a traditional food in the Andes. A bit of port is added by some cooks just before serving.

1½ pounds boneless pork, cubed
6 cloves garlic, chopped
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 TBS ground cumin
1 TBS paprika
1 tsp chili powder
¼ tsp salt
4 TBS oil
4 potatoes, peeled and sliced into eighths
2 cups chicken stock
½ cup toasted peanuts
3 crackers
4 cubes dark semi-sweet chocolate (optional)

Marinate meat in garlic, pepper, vinegar, cumin, paprika, chili, and salt for 3 hours or overnight. Drain meat and reserve marinade.
Heat oil in a skillet and brown potatoes. Set aside.
Brown meat in the skillet, and drain meat chunks on paper towels to absorb excess oil.
Pour off oil in skillet, leaving only a thin film. Pour in marinade and cook briskly for 2 minutes.
Into a heavy stewing pot, put potatoes, meat, and marinade.
Add stock, cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 1 hour or until tender.
Just before serving, roughly grind in a food processor the toasted peanuts with crackers and stir into stew. Stir in chocolate, if using.
Serve with white rice.

Lima Potato Salad (Causa Limeña)

This is traditionally served with fried fish as an appetizer, or as a first course for a main meal, or for a light supper. Potatoes used in the original recipe are yellow or blue.

4 large potatoes
water as needed
salt, pepper to taste
juice of 4 limes
¼ cup olive oil
1 hard-boiled egg, cut into thin rounds
lettuce leaves
12 (or more, if desired) black or green olives, without pits, sliced crosswise
frozen sweet corn, thawed and drained
1 avocado, cubed and sprinkled with lime juice to deter browning
4 slices of white cheese or feta cheese

Boil potatoes in salted water until tender, for about 25–30 minutes. Drain, peel, and mash while still hot.
Season immediately with salt, pepper, lime juice (reserve 2 tablespoons for marinating avocado), and oil, mixing well. Let cool.
Take portions of mashed potato and form into plum-sized balls, flattening them on top.
Place each on a serving plate and drizzle with Creole sauce.
To serve, garnish each mashed potato ball with a slice of egg. Surround with lettuce, olives, corn kernels, avocado, and pieces of fresh cheese.

Creole Sauce

1 red onion, finely chopped
¼ tsp salt
pepper to taste
juice of 2 limes
juice of 1 orange
2 TBS olive oil
parsley or cilantro, chopped
3 or more drops hot pepper sauce (optional)

Place onion in a bowl; add salt, pepper, citrus juices, olive oil, parsley or cilantro, and hot pepper sauce, if using. Mix well.

Stuffed Bell Peppers (Rocoto Relleno)

The original recipe from Arequipa uses very hot bell peppers called *rocoto*. This is served as a first course for a main meal, or as a main dish at supper.

4 red or yellow bell peppers
2 TBS olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ pound lean ground beef
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp ground oregano
1 TBS natural unsalted peanut butter
¼ cup cream cheese

salt and pepper
½ cup grated cheddar cheese (plus extra for garnish)
1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
½ cup half-and-half or evaporated milk

Slice off the top of each pepper for a "lid," with the stalk as a "handle." With a teaspoon, carefully remove the pepper seeds and white pith. Rinse peppers and tops. Set aside.
Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in onion and garlic and stir-fry until soft.
Stir in beef, chili powder, and oregano and cook until the meat changes color.
Add peanut butter, cream cheese, and salt and pepper to taste.
Remove from heat and gently mix in ¾ of the grated cheese, and all the egg.
Stuff the peppers and arrange in a baking dish.
Pour about 2 tablespoons half-and-half into each, top with remaining cheese, and cover with the sliced-off tops.
Place any remaining stuffing and cream on the baking dish around the peppers.
Bake at 350°F for about 40 minutes, or until the peppers are tender.
Serve with boiled or fried potatoes.
Arrange extra cooked stuffing on a plate and sprinkle with additional grated cheese, if desired.

Caramel Sauce and Fruit
(Natillas Piuranas)

The traditional ingredient of this caramelized custard sauce is fresh goat's milk. Long, watchful cooking ensures the fullest caramel flavor possible. A less time-consuming method is to buy a jar of *dulce de leche*, found in Hispanic food sections in large supermarkets or specialty stores. This sauce is good with any fruit you wish to serve.

1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
2 cups milk
½ tsp baking soda
1½ cups packed dark brown sugar
¼ cup water
2 ripe bananas, sliced and mixed with juice of 1 lemon to prevent discoloring
2 ripe peaches, peeled and sliced
½ cup toasted walnuts or almonds, chopped

Heat evaporated milk, milk, and baking soda to boiling in a pan.
Turn off heat and set aside.
Caramelize brown sugar and water in a thick-bottomed pan such as a Dutch oven, over low heat, stirring constantly until sugar is dissolved.

(*continued*)

Add milk mixture.
Cook uncovered over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until mixture is very thick and golden brown, for about 1 hour. Let cool.
When cold, pour into serving dish and chill for 4 hours or overnight.
Serve over sliced fruit. Garnish with toasted nuts.

PHILIPPINES

The Philippines—one of the only two Christian countries in Southeast Asia (the other is East Timor)—comprises over 7000 islands, not all habitable and mostly mountainous. For more than three centuries it was a Spanish, then an American, colony, becoming fully independent in 1946. The hot and humid plains produce rice, tropical fruits, and vegetables, livestock, and poultry. The coasts provide fish and seafood.

Filipinos consist of several ethnic groups, predominantly Tagalog, Cebuano and Ilocano, Chinese, East Indian, and other groups. Philippine cooking is heavily influenced by Spain, South China, and the United States.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, fish, vegetables.
- Fresh-water and sea fish (farmed milkfish esteemed), seafood, pork (including blood, innards, skin), chicken, beef, wild game.
- Eggplant, squash, various greens (sweet potato shoots, bitter melon shoots), bitter melon, okra, long beans, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, potato, corn, banana blossom, unripe papaya.
- Banana, coconut, pineapple, citrus (tangerine, mandarin, pomelo), mango, jackfruit, yellow *lanzones* berries, purple *duhat* berries, star apple, star fruit, strawberries (in the highlands); cashew nut, pili nut; imported fruits such as apple, Asian pear, grapes, navel orange.
- Seasonings: garlic, pepper, tomato, onion, bay leaf, annatto seeds, oregano, cinnamon, vanilla, anise, cilantro, native lemon (*calamansi*), fish sauce (*patis*), fish/shrimp paste (*bagoong, alamang*), soy sauce; table condiments, including banana ketchup; vinegar, garlic, and/or chili; fish sauce and native lemon.

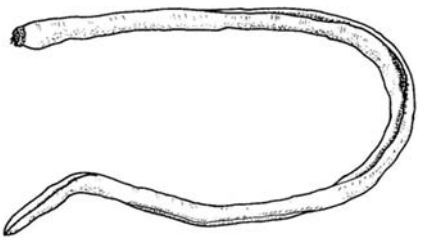
Typical Dishes

- Fish and seafood dishes: sour soup (*sinigang*); marinated oysters (*kilawin*); marinated fish (*escabeche*).
- Pork dishes: vinegar and garlic stewed pork (*adobo*) is the national dish; roast pig (*lechon*); blood stew or pudding (depending on region, *dinuguan*); barbecue.
- Spanish-influenced stews/soups of meat and/or vegetables: *estofado*, *pochero*.

- Spanish-influenced meat/poultry dishes: stuffed pork roll (*embutido*), stuffed chicken (chicken *relleno*).
- Chinese-influenced dishes: eggrolls, fried noodles (*pancit*), noodles with soup (*mami*), meat-filled steamed buns and savory filled dumplings (*dim sum*).
- American-style fast food, pasta, and salads: hamburger, hotdog, tuna fish sandwich, pizza, spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, potato salad. (Although originally Italian, pizza and spaghetti were introduced by Americans and are thus American adaptations.)
- Sweets: rice and coconut confections, American-style cakes, Spanish-style custards (*leche flan*) and rich egg- or milk-based candies (*yema*, *tocino del cielo*, *pastillas*), Chinese-style pastries (bean-filled moon cakes).
- Drinks: native lemon (*calamansi*) juice, fresh and processed soursop and other tropical fruit juices, coffee, tea, chocolate, locally brewed palm wine (*tuba*), rice wine (*tapuy*), beer, rum, bottled soda drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Traditional meals (especially fish and seafood) eaten with fingers; fork and spoon also used. Table knives rarely used at home; used for Western-style meals and American-style steaks. Families, usually several generations, eat dinner together.



LONG BEAN

- Breakfast: bread rolls (*pan de sal*), butter, guava or coconut jam, boiled or fried eggs; chocolate-flavored rice porridge (*champorado*); fried rice, sausage (*longganisa*), salted duck egg. Coffee, fruit juice.
- Lunch: noodles with or without soup, meat and vegetable spring roll (fresh *lumpia*), pizza, pasta, American-style ham or cheese sandwich, rice with side dish of fish or meat and vegetable, fresh fruit.
- Dinner: rice, soup, fish or meat dish, vegetable dish; fresh/cooked fruit or dessert (coconut ice cream, custard).
- Snacks: coffee, tea, fruit juice, cold cola or other soft drink with Western-style cake or rice cake; fried banana or sweet potato; sandwiches; unripe mango dipped in salt or fish/shrimp paste; ripe tropical fruits; boiled fertilized duck egg (*balut*).
- Filipinos love to eat and eat out frequently at many types of eating venues—itinerant peddlers, street stalls, markets, specialized restaurants, and international fast food chains (in larger cities).

Sour Soup (Sinigang)

This soup is commonly made with fish, especially farmed milkfish, which is plentiful, or large shrimps. It is also made with pork ribs. For flavoring, any kind of sour fruit can be used, typically native lemons (*calamansi*), but specially prized are tamarind flower buds and tender young leaves, unripe and ripe guavas, or slices of star fruit, for their distinctive aromas. In rural communities, *sinigang* is made with the morning's catch and served for lunch with plain cooked rice and sometimes with fried fish dipped into a table condiment of fish sauce and lemon

(*calamansi*), or soy sauce and lemon. Trout substitutes for the original milkfish, which has a similar delicate flavor and texture. Some Oriental stores now stock frozen milkfish.

4 cups water (preferably from rinsing rice; see note below) or fish stock
1 pound fresh whole trout, scaled and cleaned, sliced crosswise into 1-inch-thick pieces (including head and tail for stock)
2 tomatoes, quartered
1 onion, thinly sliced
3 TBS fish sauce (*patis*)
juice of 1 or more lemons
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced into eighths
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced into eighths
1 ripe guava, quartered (optional)
2 cups watercress

In a covered saucepan, put to boil the water or stock with fish head and tail, tomatoes, onion, and fish sauce.
Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
Add lemon juice, bell peppers, fish slices, and guava, if using.
Adjust seasoning, adding more lemon juice and/or fish sauce as desired.
When the soup returns to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for another 5–7 minutes or until the fish is just done. Turn off heat. Add watercress. Do not replace cover once watercress is added.
Serve at once into individual bowls.
Note: Rice is washed and rinsed until the water is clear. Use water from the second washing.

Fresh Egg Rolls (*Fresh* Lumpia)

Fresh *lumpia*, as opposed to regular *lumpia* (i.e., fried egg rolls with crisp wrapper), are enclosed in soft crepe-like wrappers and eaten with a garlicky soy-based sauce. This delicacy is usually made by specialty restaurants. An excellent first course, it is also often served at buffets to celebrate birthdays or other special occasions.

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 onion, sliced
¼ cup oil
½ pound boiled boneless pork, diced
½ cup fresh shrimp
½ cup cooked chickpeas
1 cup string beans, finely sliced
1 medium carrot, in strips
1 pound heart of palm, in strips, or water chestnuts, sliced
2 cups cabbage, shredded
salt and pepper to taste
12–24 romaine or cos lettuce leaves
bunch chives (or roughly 15 spring onions, split in half lengthwise)

Sauté garlic and onion in oil; add meat, shrimp, and chickpeas.
Cover and simmer for 2 minutes.

(*continued*)

Add beans, carrot, palm heart, cabbage, and seasoning; cook uncovered until just tender but still crisp. Drain and set aside.
Line wrapper with 1–2 lettuce leaves and 2–3 stalks of chives or spring onions. The leaves should protrude from one end of the wrapper.
Place 2 tablespoons of filling at the center of wrapper. Fold the near edge of the wrapper over the filling, fold over one side, leaving the side with leaves unfolded, and continue rolling.
If not to be eaten immediately, refrigerate and cover with cling film to keep wrappers moist.
Serve with 2 tablespoons of brown sauce spooned across the *lumpia*.
Place remaining brown sauce in a bowl for diners to help themselves at the table.

Soft Lumpia Wrappers

(about 12 thin crepes)
4 eggs
1 cup water
½ cup cornstarch
pinch salt
oil spray

Separate eggs. Beat whites till stiff. Beat in yolks gently.
Dissolve cornstarch in water, add salt, and mix in well with eggs.
Coat frying pan with oil spray. Place at medium heat.
Pour about 2 tablespoons of mixture into the medium-hot pan. Tilt pan, quickly spreading mixture thinly to about 6–8 inches diameter.
When the edges curl up, carefully remove crepe from pan. Do not turn over.
Fold into quarters and set on plate; cover with towel to keep from drying out.
Repeat with remaining mixture.

Brown Sauce

2 TBS oil
2 TBS finely minced garlic
½ cup sugar
2 TBS soy sauce
1 cup water or broth
1 tsp salt
2 TBS cornstarch
3 TBS water

Heat oil in a frying pan and slowly brown garlic. Set aside.
Combine the next four ingredients, add to pan, and bring to a boil.
Mix cornstarch with water, and stir into boiling sauce until it thickens.
Remove from heat.
Top with garlic.

Beefsteak (Bistek)

This Filipino-style beefsteak is very popular with all ages. Most Filipinos like their steaks well done. Since the meat is marinated until tender, Filipinos do not usually eat this with a table knife; a spoon fulfills the same function. Serve with rice and garnish with lemons and fried onions for a dinner dish, accompanied by a vegetable dish and soup.

1½ pounds beef, London broil or round steak, roughly 5×5-inch portions, sliced thin
½ cup lemon juice
4 TBS soy sauce
ground black pepper to taste
4 TBS (or more) oil
2 onions, cut into rings
lemon quarters for serving

Marinate beef in lemon juice, soy sauce, and pepper for 30 minutes or longer. Reserve the marinade.
Drain and quickly shallow fry in hot oil to desired doneness. Keep warm.
Add more oil to pan if needed; fry onions until soft and golden.
Set aside half the onions for garnish.
Add marinade to onions in the pan; heat to boiling.
Adjust seasoning: it should be quite tart and lemony.
Diners squeeze additional lemon juice over steaks, and may add soy sauce.
Serve steaks topped with onions and drizzled with the lemony sauce.

Savory Fritters (Ukoy)

These fritters are a typical afternoon snack, available freshly fried at roadside stands or else peddled around city neighborhoods. They are eaten dipped in or sprinkled with vinegar and garlic sauce. Filipinos like to drink very cold carbonated cola or other soft drinks with snacks like this. This can also be served as a first course for a meal.

6 TBS cornstarch
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
3 egg whites, beaten stiff
1 cup bean sprouts
½ cup cooked and shelled shrimp
oil for frying

Mix cornstarch and seasoning and fold egg whites gently into cornstarch mixture.
Fold in bean sprouts and shrimp.
Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a wide skillet; drop 2 tablespoonfuls of the mixture per fritter, keeping them well apart.
Fry only 2 or 3 at a time.
Press on the fritters to flatten them and fry until crisp and golden on both sides.
Lay on paper towels to absorb oil.
Serve with vinegar and garlic sauce as a dip or to be sprinkled over fritters just before eating.

Vinegar and Garlic Sauce

½ cup vinegar
1 TBS minced garlic
1 tsp salt
1 red or green chili, sliced (retain seeds for hotter sauce), (optional)

(*continued*)

Mix all ingredients in a sauce container or bottle; let stand for 20 minutes or longer.
Sauce will keep for a month in the refrigerator; good over grilled, roast, or fried dishes.

Rice Cake (Bibingka)

Bibingka is a generic term for various kinds of rice cakes, often eaten as snack or dessert. Each region has its own version. The *bibingka* typical of Manila and nearby provinces in southeastern Luzon is made of rice flour, baked in a round clay pan lined with banana leaves, topped with mild salty white cheese made from water buffalo milk, and eaten with freshly grated coconut. This variant is a dense layer cake from northern Luzon, usually eaten with a cold fizzy drink or a hot drink (tea with lemon or coffee).

3 cups coconut milk
2 cups glutinous rice
¼ tsp salt
1 cup brown sugar
2 cups coconut milk
1 cup sugar
1 tsp anise seeds
butter or oil for greasing

Place the first three ingredients in a heavy pot with tight-fitting lid.
Cover, bring to a boil, and reduce heat immediately to minimum.
Gently simmer until all the liquid is absorbed (about 10 minutes). Remove from heat.
Stir in brown sugar until evenly distributed. Spread in a greased 8×10-inch baking pan.
Mix thoroughly the coconut milk, sugar, and anise; pour over rice.
Bake for 20–30 minutes at 350°F until nicely browned. Let cool.
Cut into bars or squares to serve.

POLAND

Poland is a Central European country located between Germany and Russia. Much of the country is a rolling plain, gradually rising from the Baltic toward the southeast. Climate is cool, and large areas of the country are covered with forests. Agriculture is a major occupation. Rye and barley, potatoes and sugar beets are raised, as well as hogs, and in southern parts of the country, beef and mutton.

Most Poles are observant Catholics, and Catholic festivals, notably Christmas, play a large part in the cuisine. *Wigilia* (Vigil, waiting for the Christ baby to be born) is the name of the traditional twelve-course Christmas dinner. Another festival is *Dozynki*, a harvest festival where bread from the new harvest is eaten in rural areas.

Polish cooking has borrowed from many traditions, including French, Russian, Jewish (until World War II, over a third of the population was Jewish), Tatar, Hungarian, and Lithuanian.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potatoes, wheat, rye, barley. No meal is complete without rye, wheat, or barley bread on the table.
- Meat: Pork is the nationally preferred meat, though chicken, goose, duck, and beef are also popular.
- Fish: eel, herring from the Baltic, and carp, pike, perch, sturgeon from ponds and rivers.
- Mushrooms from the forests, for sauces and dishes, are very common in season.
- Vegetables: cabbage, beets, onions, carrots.
- Very popular ingredients which appear in virtually every dish are sauerkraut, vegetables, fruit, and fresh or dried mushrooms.

Typical Dishes

- Soups: *Barszcz*, or red beet soup, served with stuffed dumplings; *zurek*, fermented rye soup; *chlodnik*, a cold beet and vegetables in sour milk soup, which is available only in the summer. Some other soups are occasionally available and these include *grzybowa* (wild mushroom), *ogórkowa* (pickle), and *kapusniak* (cabbage).

- Appetizers include smoked salmon (*losos wedzony*), smoked eel (*wegorz wedzony*), herring (*sledz*) in various forms, salmon, caviar, and cold cuts and sausages. Hot appetizers are also popular, and these include pan-fried mushrooms, tripe, and snails. *Kielbasa* (sausage), *golabki* (cabbage rolls), stuffed eggs, mushrooms in sour cream.
- Salads: *surówka*, which consists of grated winter vegetables like cabbage, red cabbage, carrots, leeks, and apples. *Mizeria*, sliced raw cucumbers in sour cream or sour milk.
- Main dishes with meat: boneless pork chops (*kotlet schabowy*) or pork loin (*pieczen*), which is usually served with a sauce such as *sos mysliwski* (sweet sauce with raisins and honey) or *sos grzybowy* with wild mushrooms. Hunter's stew (*bigos*), with meat and cabbage. Duck filled with apples, rubbed with marjoram, and roasted in the oven, basted often with water and red wine. Chicken stuffed with liver, rye bread, egg, butter, spices, and parsley springs, and roasted in the oven.
- Fish: boiled, fried, roasted, fried in bread crumbs, and served with stuffing, sauces, and accompaniments. Carp, the traditional Christmas dish, is especially popular and comes in different varieties: in aspic, fried or served in grey Polish sauce with raisins and almonds (Jewish-style carp).
- Dessert and pastries include apple cakes (*szarlotka*), cheesecake (*sernik*), and poppy seed rolls (*makowiec*). There are also layer cakes, apple tarts, cream cakes, and doughnuts, and both sweet and savory *pierogil* (dumplings). Desserts like poppy seed cake, crullers, royal *mazurek* (a cherry pie), saffron *babas*, and buckwheat and raisin pudding.
- Seasonal dishes like Christmas *borcsch* with *pierogil*, which is served not only at Christmas, but also Easter.
- Drinks: *kvass*, mead, fruit juices, tea, coffee, milk, bottled soda drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day, eaten rather early, and snacks.
- Breakfast: porridge, baked goods, bread, cold meats, eggs; *nalestniki* (filled crepes). Tea, milk, or coffee.
- The main meal of the day is at midday or early in the afternoon and normally consists of soup, a main course almost always with meat or fish, and dessert.
- Evening: light meal of salad, boiled potatoes, stuffed vegetables.

Cabbage with Apples
(Kapusta z Jablkamy)

This is a vegetable dish to accompany the main meat dish.

1 medium cabbage, core and tough ribs discarded, shredded
2 onions, sliced thin
boiling water as needed
3 strips bacon, cubed and fried
3 tart apples, peeled, cored, and diced
2 TBS tomato paste
1 tsp sugar
salt to taste

Cover cabbage and onions with boiling water. Let stand for 10 minutes. Drain.
Place bacon slices in the bottom of a pot. Add cabbage mixture, apples, and tomato paste.
Add sugar and simmer until tender, for about 20 minutes. Season.
Serve with any meat dish.

Cooked Beets (Cwikla)

This is eaten as a pickle for the midday or evening meal, with fish, meat, or eggs (see box "Pickles").

3 cups beets, freshly boiled or canned, sliced
1 TBS fresh horseradish, grated (or use about 4 tsp prepared horseradish)
½ tsp caraway seed
2 cups vinegar
1 TBS brown sugar
2 tsp salt

Layer beets in a glass or earthenware bowl, sprinkling each layer with horseradish and caraway.
Boil vinegar with sugar and salt for 2 minutes. Pour over beets.
Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.
Eat with meat course.

PICKLES

The fundamental problem of all human societies, historically, has been to ensure a steady supply of food (above starvation levels) throughout the entire year, even when crops are not available. This is done in various ways, one of the most common being pickling. Pickling can consist of one or more processes. "Long" pickles are vegetables, fish, fruit, eggs, or meat fermented in the presence of salt, to increase their lactic acid content and retard bacterial spoilage. They can then be flavored in a variety of ways (with vinegar, sugar, spices, herbs, salt, or any combination of these). "Short" pickles are not true pickles. They consist of food that has been soaked in brine, salt, or vinegar for a few hours to extract excess liquid and flavor the contents. Pickles are particularly important in northern European, Middle Eastern, and east and Southeast Asian cuisines, where they are essential components in most meals.

Fish Casserole (Potravwa Zapiekana)

The main meal may have a meat and a fish dish such as this.

oil or lard for greasing casserole
3 boiled potatoes, peeled and sliced
2 cups cooked fish, deboned and diced
1 cup cauliflower, sliced
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and sliced
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS flour
1 cup sour cream
¼ cup water
3 TBS bread crumbs
2 TBS parmesan cheese
2 TBS butter

Grease a casserole.
Arrange half the potato slices, fish, cauliflower, and eggs in the casserole. Season.
Blend flour into sour cream. Stir in water and spoon mixture over fish.
Add remaining potatoes, fish, cauliflower, and eggs.
Mix bread crumbs, cheese, and butter. Sprinkle over casserole.
Bake for 30 minutes at 350°F, or until golden brown.

Meatballs with Sour Cream (Klopsk W Smietanie)

This is a favorite main dish.

2 slices stale bread, crust removed
⅓ cup milk
3 TBS butter
1 small onion, minced fine
1 pound ground beef
2 eggs, separated
1 TBS fresh dill, minced fine
½ tsp fresh tarragon, chopped
salt and pepper to taste
flour, as needed
¼ cup butter
¼ pound mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
¾ cup sour cream

Soak bread in milk.
Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a frying pan. Sauté onion until soft.
Combine onion with meat, lightly beaten egg yolks, bread mixture, dill, tarragon, salt, and pepper.
Beat 2 egg whites to soft peaks; fold into beef mixture.
With moistened hands, form small balls (about golf-ball size) from the beef mixture and coat with flour.
Heat ¼ cup butter in a wide frying pan; when foam subsides, add meatballs and brown on all sides.
In another pan, sauté mushrooms in 2 tablespoons butter.

Add to meatballs and stir in sour cream, coating the meatballs.
Simmer the mixture, partially covered, over low heat for 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Season and serve with potatoes and salad.

Wigilia Fruit Compote (Kompot W Spirytusie)

Wigilia is the main celebratory meal of the year, composed of at least twelve dishes of various local products.

4 cups water
1 pound mixed dried fruit (pears, figs, apricots, apples)
5 ounces pitted prunes
2 ounces seedless raisins
8 ounces pitted sweet cherries
2 apples, peeled, cored, and sliced into rings
2 ounces cranberries
8 ounces sugar
1 lemon, sliced
6 whole cloves
2 cinnamon sticks
1 orange, rind grated and reserved, peeled, sectioned, and all white membrane discarded
4 ounces grapes, or pitted plums

Combine water, mixed dried fruits, prunes, and raisins in a large pot.
Bring to a boil; cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
Add cherries, apples, and cranberries.
Stir in sugar, lemon, and spices.
Cover and simmer for about 5 minutes.
Add orange sections and grapes.
Bring just to a boil and immediately remove from heat.
Stir in the orange rind, cover, and let stand for 15 minutes.

Christmas Porridge (Kutia Wigilijna)

This is an essential component of the Wigilia meal. It may also be eaten for breakfast on other occassions.

1 cup cracked wheat
2 cups hot water
1 tsp salt
½ cup poppy seeds
1 cup honey
2 cups water

Soak wheat in hot water for 30 minutes.
Bring to a boil with the salt and cook covered until tender.
Mix in poppy seeds.
Cook honey with remaining 2 cups of water for 20 minutes.
Cool and pour over wheat and poppy seed mixture.
Serve in individual bowls.

PORTUGAL

On the southwestern coast of the Iberian peninsula facing the Atlantic, Portugal was the major world power in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, leading the European exploration of Asia and the coast of Africa. The centuries-long Portuguese empire is responsible for spreading throughout the world many food plants and items from their original homes in Asia, the Americas, and Africa: Indian and Indonesian spices and cooking methods, exotic fruits and nuts, salted codfish.

The country is mostly mountainous with a temperate climate, and a range of Mediterranean-type crops are grown: olives, grapes, wheat and other grains. Cows, sheep, and other livestock are raised for milk and cheese; fish are caught from the coast.

The population is largely Iberian, with several minority communities from Portugal's former colonies: Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, East Timor, and Brazil. The expatriate and colonial communities introduce tropical and exotic cooking forms to the urban diet. Regional foods have kept their distinctive differences. Portuguese cuisine is rich and diverse, with commonalities with Spanish cuisine, but is also distinct.

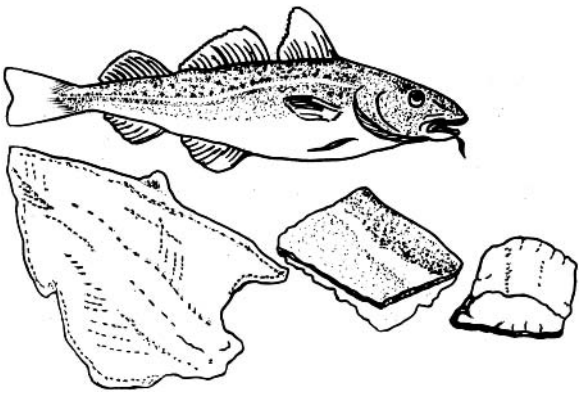
Foodstuffs

- Potatoes and wheat are the main staples. Maize is also often eaten.
- Fish and seafood are very important items of the diet, notably dried, slated codfish (*bacalhau*), which almost defines Portuguese cooking. Grouper, mullet, halibut, sardines. Crustaceans such as *camarao* (shrimp) and other seafood including *lulas* (squid).
- Meat: pork, beef, chicken. Mutton and goat in mountain areas. Many areas produce dried sausages and preserved meats, such as *linguiça*, *chouriço*, *lombo enguitado*.
- Vegetables: potatoes, peppers (both sweet and hot), tomatoes, onions, and garlic.
- Fruit: apples, pears, plums, grapes, both for wine and for the table. Olives and olive oil. Imported tropical fruit. Honey is an important ingredient appearing in desserts and cakes such as *bolo de mel*.

- Dairy: milk products, including a large variety of hard and soft cheeses, the most famous of which come from the Tras-os-Montes region in the northeast.
- Flavoring principles include olive oil; tomatoes; garlic; and a variety of spice mixes including *piri-piri*, a chili sauce that has spread from Portugal across Africa, curry, and ginger.

Typical Dishes

- Grilling, particularly roast suckling pig (*leitão*) and *piri-piri*-marinated chicken; simmering in broth; and casseroling are common cooking methods. Unusually for Europeans (but like the Catalans and the Chinese) the Portuguese combine meat and seafood in the same dish, such as pork cooked with mussels.
- Fried little fish in a light batter (e.g., *joaquizinhos fritos*) are possibly the precursor of Japanese *tempura*.
- Soups: *caldo verde* (kale soup); *canja de galinha* (chicken soup); *sopa do mar* (seafood soup).
- Meat: *cozido* (stew); *migas con entrecosto* (spare-ribs cooked with bread); *bitoque* (fried beefsteak with an egg on top).
- Snacks: *lulas recheadas* (stuffed squid); *bolas de bacalhau* (fried salt-dried codfish balls, possibly the most loved snack).
- Portuguese desserts are heavily influenced by Moorish flavors, rich in egg, milk or cream, and nuts.
- Pastries abound, sold in neighborhood *pastillerias*: *leite crème* (custard), *arroz doce* (sweet rice), *pudim de mel* (honey pudding), *bolo de mel* (honey cake), *pudim de laranja* (orange cake), *pastéis de nata* (egg custard tarts).
- Tropical fruit drinks, coffee, and excellent local wines are the favored drinks for all ages. Coffee is served after meals, or for breaks, together with one of the vast varieties of pastries.



CODFISH

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and plenty of snacks.
- Place settings are standard European.
- Breakfast: breads, cheeses, cold cuts. Coffee or hot chocolate.
- The main meal of the day is lunch. Appetizer; soup; meat or fish (or mixed) main dish with potatoes, rice or noodles; dessert.
- Evening meal may be like lunch but simpler and without a meat dish.
- Many snacks are eaten during the day, either purchased from street vendors or at small pastilleria or bars. Savory and sweet snacks might come instead of a sit-down meal in the evening.
- Wine, mineral water, beer, or fruit juices are commonly drunk with meals.

Kale Soup (Caldo Verde)

A very traditional soup originating from the north but now popular all over the country. There are many regional variations.

½ cup olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
¼ pound of garlicky smoked sausage such as *chouriço*, or *linguiça*, sliced
3 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced thick
6 cups water
½ pound kale, tough ribs removed or scraped, finely shredded
salt to taste

Heat oil and sauté onion until translucent. Add sausage and cook for an additional minute. Set aside.
Cook potatoes in water until quite soft. Mash into the water.
Add kale to the potatoes and water. Simmer for 5–10 minutes, or until the kale is tender.
Add the sausage, onion, and their oil.
Cook until heated through. Do not overcook. Season to taste.
Serve as a first course or as light meal with crusty bread or rolls.

Roasted Bell Peppers (Pimentos Assados)

Grilled or roasted vegetables are served as savory snacks or appetizers.

4 large bell peppers

Dressing

½ cup olive oil
2–3 TBS wine vinegar
salt and pepper to taste
3 garlic cloves, minced

Wash and dry peppers.
Grill under or on a hot flame, turning often so that they scorch on all sides.
Remove from heat and dip into cold water. Peel off papery skin.
Slit open, remove stem and all seeds, and slice into thin, long strips.
Mix dressing ingredients, and pour over peppers.
Serve as a salad. Any leftovers will keep in a closed jar in the refrigerator for about a week.

Onion and Tomato Relish
(Sebolada)

This can be served to flavor many dishes, including *cozido* (stew).

3 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, cut into thin rings
4 garlic cloves, minced
4 medium tomatoes, skinned and chopped roughly
1–3 chili peppers (depending on preferred heat), cored, shredded fine
¼ tsp black pepper
salt to taste
1 TBS vinegar

Heat oil over medium heat in a deep pan.
Sauté onions until translucent. Add garlic and tomatoes and stir well.
Add chilies. Cook for 5–10 minutes until tomatoes are softened.
Add remaining ingredients.
Serve with fried fish, chicken and rice, or with meat and boiled potatoes.

Chicken and Rice
(Frango com Arroz)

This is a main dish served at lunch.

½ chicken, cut into serving pieces
4 cups water
1 onion, sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced fine
2 TBS butter
2 bay leaves
½ can tomato paste
1 TBS cumin powder
salt to taste
1 cup rice, rinsed and drained

In a heavy covered pot, place all ingredients except rice to gently stew.
Simmer, covered, for 45 minutes, or until chicken is tender.
Raise heat to bring stew to a boil. Add the rice and reduce heat to lowest.
Simmer, covered, until rice is done, about 20–25 minutes, and most of the liquid has evaporated.
Taste and adjust seasoning.

Codfish Burgers
(Bolas de Bacalhau)

This popular snack is available at almost any bar or *pastilleria*. It exemplifies, perhaps more than anything else, the Portuguese dependence on the sea, and most notably on the cod.

½ pound dried salt cod (*bacalhau*)
2 cups water
1 small onion, minced fine
1 bay leaf
3 cups potatoes, boiled, peeled, and mashed
salt and black pepper to taste
1 TBS parsley
2 eggs, beaten with a pinch of salt
about 1 cup cornmeal
vegetable oil for frying

The day before, wash salt cod and soak in cold water overnight, changing the water at least twice.
Drain and discard water. The cod should feel soft. Discard any bones and skin.
In a saucepan, bring water, onion, and bay leaf to a simmer. After 5 minutes, add the fish. Ensure the water covers the fish. As soon as it has re-simmered, cover and remove from heat (salt cod toughens quickly!). Let cool briefly.
Drain the fish and pound in a mortar to separate the flesh into fine shreds (or, though quicker but not with the same result, in a food processor).
Add mashed potatoes, seasoning, parsley, and half the eggs.
(Add some cornmeal if the mixture is too moist.)
Shape cod mixture into oval patties about 1-inch thick, and 3×2 inches, or small lemon-sized and shaped balls.
Heat to moderate heat enough oil for deep frying in a frying pan.
Fry a few at a time until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.
Serve warm or cold as a snack at any time of the day.

Pork Bits
(Vinho d'Alhos)

This can serve as a main dish eaten with French fries and a salad.

1 tsp salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp cumin powder
⅓ cup cold water
⅓ cup vinegar
1 tsp sugar
2 pounds lean, boneless pork, cut into 2-inch cubes
¼ cup vegetable oil

Mash salt, garlic, pepper, and cumin together in a bowl.
Add water, vinegar, and sugar and mix together well.
Add pork and mix until all meat is moistened.
Cover and marinate for 6 hours or overnight.
Just before cooking, remove and drain the pork; discard the marinade.
Heat the oil in a heavy pot.

Add the pork and gently braise on very low heat, turning meat constantly, for about 25 minutes. The pork will be golden brown and quite crisp.
Serve as a main dish or appetizer.

Rice Pudding (Arroz Doce)

This is a very common dessert, with regional variations.

3 eggs, separated
1 cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
4 cups milk
4 cups water
a pinch of salt
1 cup short-grain (risotto) rice
½ cup butter
grated rind of 1 lemon
1 TBS (or more) lemon juice
cinnamon powder

Beat egg whites until stiff, and set aside in the refrigerator.
Beat ½ cup sugar with the yolks and vanilla.
In a heavy saucepan, bring milk, water, remaining ½ cup sugar, and salt to a boil.
Reduce heat immediately and slowly add rice and butter, stirring constantly. Cook on low heat until all liquid is absorbed and rice is cooked, about 20 minutes.
Add more hot milk if necessary and continue cooking if rice is not done.
Remove from heat.
Add 2 tablespoons hot rice to the egg yolk mixture and mix well. Add to the rice in the pan.
Fold in egg whites, lemon rind, and lemon juice to taste.
Sprinkle with cinnamon.
Serve as dessert.

QATAR

A small peninsula (30×100 miles) sticking out of the Arabian peninsula into the Persian Gulf, Qatar is one of the smaller Arab states. The land is rolling desert and rocky hills. The climate is hot and muggy except for the winter, which is warmly comfortable.

The population is a mix of Sunni and Shi'a Arabs. Cuisine is heavily influenced by the Indian sub-continent (ships from Qatar have traded with India for millennia). As Muslims, Qataris do not eat pork.

Foodstuffs

- Rice, and breads of wheat flour are the popular staples.
- Meat: camel, particularly camel calf; mutton; beef.
- Fish and seafood: shrimp and some varieties of shellfish.
- Vegetables: pumpkins, squash, gourds, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, eggplant, cabbage, cauliflower.
- Fruit: dates, melons.
- Dairy: camel's and ewe's milk, drunk fresh, as buttermilk, or made into butter, yogurt, or cheese.
- Flavoring principles include samna (ghee, or clarified butter), turmeric, and onions.

Typical Dishes

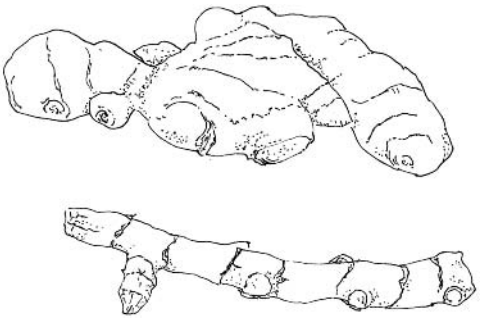
- Deep-fried, baked, and mixed dishes of vegetables and meat cooked with rice are popular.
- Grilled meat, either *kafta* (meatballs) or chunks of meat, cooked on spits.
- *Kharees* (rice cooked with shredded meat and doused with ghee).

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day and snacks are gradually being replaced by three meals a day.
- Traditional meals are eaten by the entire family sitting around a common dish of rice and meat or vegetables, eaten with the right hand only. Male and female

guests eat separately. Western dining with individual place settings and cutlery is becoming common when eating out.

- Breakfast: breads, butter/samna, fruit, particularly dates. Coffee or buttermilk.
- Lunch: salad or fresh vegetables; dips with flat breads; rice dishes such as *biryani*; *samboosa* (filled baked or fried pies).
- Dinner: rice cooked with meat; fish dish; salads; fruit; coffee.
- Snacks: fruit; sweet pastries with coffee.
- Coffee is drunk after meals and at breaks throughout the day. Buttermilk and water, fruit juices, and international soft drinks are drunk with meals.



TURMERIC ROOT AND GINGER

Minced Meat Grill
(Kafta 'al Seekh)

A main dish almost always includes meat, and grilled meat is a great favorite.

¾ pound ground lamb (turkey, chicken, or beef)
½ cup onions, chopped fine
3 large cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp fenugreek powder
1 tsp cumin powder
½ tsp coriander powder
½ cup parsley, freshly chopped
¼ tsp black pepper
1 tsp salt
metal skewers
1 head lettuce, shredded (for serving)
2 tomatoes, chopped (for serving)
½ cup yogurt (for serving)
cucumber, chopped (for serving)
4 large flat breads (for serving)

Combine the first nine ingredients.
With moistened hands, roll into balls (*kafta*) about the size of an egg.
Thread a skewer through each meatball and mold the mixture into a long sausage shape along the skewer.
Grill over charcoal or broil gently, careful not to overcook so the meat will stay moist.
Keep cooked meat warm in a low oven.
When all the meat has been cooked, take a skewer in one hand, and in the other a piece of flat bread to wrap around the meat. Use the bread to push the meat off the skewers and onto a plate.
To assemble: Diners each take a flat bread and lay it on a plate. Lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumbers are arranged in a row in the middle, then the *kafta* alongside. Yogurt is ladled over all, and the bread is rolled around the meat and vegetables. The bread roll is eaten with the fingers.

Cumin Potato (Batata b'Kamun)

Flavored potatoes may be served alongside meat, or on their own as a main dish for lunch.

1 pound potatoes
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 tsp cumin seed
½ cup onion, chopped
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp chili powder
¼ tsp turmeric powder
¼ tsp salt
½ tsp fresh lemon juice

Boil potatoes until piercable by a fork but still firm. Peel when cool and cut into chunks.
Heat oil in a heavy pan. Add cumin seed and stir for 10 seconds, until fragrant (be careful to avoid burning).
Add onion and sauté on low heat until translucent.
Add remaining spices and salt and stir for a few seconds.
Add potato chunks and toss to coat with spices and onions.
Keep tossing until potato is hot.
Add lemon juice and serve immediately.

Ginger Pickle (Achaar)

Both name and ingredients indicate this is a borrowing from India.

1 2-inch piece of ginger, peeled and grated
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, finely minced
1 green chili, finely minced
3 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 TBS tamarind juice or lemon juice
1 tsp *jaggery* (palm sugar; available in large molded cones from Indian stores), to taste (must be crumbled from the cone), or substitute packed soft brown sugar

Fry ginger in 1 tablespoon oil till golden. Set aside.
Heat remaining oil. Fry onion till brown. Add chili and garlic and fry for about 1 minute.
Reduce heat. Add ginger, then tamarind juice and *jaggery*. Mix well.
Use as a condiment.

Dates in Butter Sauce (Al Rangina)

Dates have been the traditional staple. Now they are served in many meals as dessert or sweet and are also eaten as snacks. This is very sweet, so serve with black coffee or a glass of cold water.

¾ pound whole dates, pits removed
¾ cup butter
2 tsp cinnamon
⅔ cup all-purpose flour
1½ TBS confectioners' sugar

Place the dates in four individual serving bowls.
Heat the butter over medium heat until it starts foaming.
Reduce heat and add cinnamon and flour.
Mix and stir constantly for 2–3 minutes until the mixture becomes a soft paste.
Pour the sauce evenly over the dates. Allow to cool.
Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

ROMANIA

Romania, an Eastern European country on the Black Sea, was ruled by the Turkish empire for many centuries. About a third of the country is arable and the climate temperate to cool, enabling maize and wheat, a range of fruits and vegetables, and pigs, cows, and other livestock to be raised.

The population comprises Romanians, as well as ethnic Hungarians and Germans.

Romanian cuisine is diverse, with pronounced Turkish, Greek, Slavic, and French influences. Romania has borders with Moldova, Ukraine, Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria, all of which have affected, and in turn been affected by, Romanian cuisine. Dishes such as *sarmale, mousaka*, *baklava*, *saraigli*, *mititei*, *halva*, and *rahat* are clearly Turkish in origin.

Meat is very popular, and Romanian meat and meat products are prized in neighboring countries.

Foodstuffs

- Maize, wheat, barley, wheat, potatoes, pasta.
- Meat: pork (the preferred meat), beef, chicken, duck, goose, turkey, venison, also variety meats (innards). Preserved meats include sausages, *pastrama* (dried meat), corned beef, smoked hams.
- Cheese from cow's and sheep's milk.
- Fish: fresh water fish (carp, trout, pike), and seawater fish such as salmon, cod, herring (mostly imported), sprats.
- Vegetables: beans, cabbage, onions, tomatoes, peppers, squashes, and zucchini. Pickles.
- Fruit: grapes, plums, apples, pears, apricots, berries of various sorts. Unripe green walnuts.

Typical Dishes

- The common staple is *mamaliga* (cornmeal mush or porridge).
- Meat is an important component of any meal, and Romanian meat grills and meat are famous throughout the region. Roasts (lamb and mutton, at Easter) and pork at Christmas.
- Stews of vegetables with pork, beef, lamb or mutton. Meat stewed with onions and garlic is traditional; duck with baked apples.

- Omelettes and scrambled eggs.
- Marinated and pickled fish.
- Jellied pork is traditionally eaten on holidays.
- Salads (*salata*) are typically eaten with the main dish; eggplant salad; bell pepper salad; potatoes with eggs and cottage cheese.
- Appetizers: savory puddings (*budinca*) and souffles.
- Soups (*supa*): vegetable soups; meat (beef and poultry); sour soups (*ciorba*) of meat, vegetables, and fish.
- Vegetables lightly sautéed in butter; *sarmale* (vegetables, such as peppers, stuffed with meat and rice).
- Layered cakes; cold fruit desserts; walnut bread is traditional at Christmas; strudels and pies; sweet puddings, particularly rice puddings.
- Preserves (quince, rose petal, green walnuts) and jams (*marmelades*: sour cherries, carrots).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day (almost all very heavy).
- Place settings are European standard in the cities, and more informal in the remoter countryside, usually consisting of a spoon and bowl.
- A typical Romanian menu will tend to include several appetizers, soups, a main dish, and dessert, many dishes slathered with sauces or cream.
- Drinks: fruit juices, locally made wine (Romania is among the top ten world producers), locally brewed beer, bottled fruit drinks and soda drinks, fruit and herb brandies (plum, apricot, cherry, caraway seed).

Dried Bean Salad (Salata de Fasole Boabe)

This is a commonly eaten salad or appetizer.

½ pound dried beans, soaked overnight and drained
1 large onion, finely chopped
2–3 TBS vinegar
salt and pepper to taste
2 TBS oil

Boil the beans in water until soft. Drain and cool.
Mix with chopped onion.
Add vinegar, seasoning, and oil. Toss well.

Cottage Cheese with Dill (Urda cu Marar)

Dairy products are commonly teamed with dill and other herbs.

½ pound cottage cheese
2 ounces butter
salt to taste
1 TBS fresh dill, minced
3 spring onions (green part only), minced

(*continued*)

Mix cheese with butter and salt to a paste.
Add dill and mix well.
Garnish with onions.
Spread on bread as a snack.

Green Bean Soup (Bors de Fasole Verde)

A soup using a common vegetable, topped with cream and dill, served as a first course.

1 TBS butter
1 onion, chopped fine
1 carrot, peeled and chopped fine
1 parsley root (also called Hamburg parsley, substitute with ½ cup leaf parsley), peeled and chopped fine
1 tsp flour
2 quarts water
10 ounces green beans, chopped into 1-inch lengths
1 pound tomatoes, skinned and chopped
salt to taste
¼ cup mixed parsley and dill, chopped fine
½ cup sour cream

Heat butter in a heavy pot. Sauté onion. When golden, add root vegetables.
Sprinkle with flour and mix thoroughly.
Slowly add water, while stirring, and the beans.
Simmer on lowest heat until the beans are tender, about 30–40 minutes.
Add tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Season with salt.
Add parsley and dill.
Serve with a dollop of cream in each plate.

Fried Zucchini with Sour Cream (Dovlecei Prajiti cu Smintina)

This can be served as a vegetable side dish or an appetizer.

6 medium zucchini, sliced fine and patted dry with paper towel
1 TBS flour
2 TBS lard
1 TBS lemon juice
salt to taste
1 cup sour cream
1 tsp butter, melted
1 tsp flour
1 tsp dill, chopped

Dredge zucchini with flour.
Heat lard in a pan and fry zucchini a few at a time until golden. Add more lard if necessary, heating well before adding vegetable.

Arrange in a casserole dish and drizzle with lemon juice. Sprinkle lightly with salt.
Mix sour cream with butter, flour, and salt.
Pour over zucchini.
Sprinkle with dill.
Bake for 20 minutes in a 350°F oven.
Serve hot.

Rolled Meat Loaf Stuffed with Macaroni
(Rulada de Carne Tocata Umpluta cu Macaroane)

This is a main dish often served accompanied by cooked vegetables such as zucchini or green beans.

2 pounds ground beef
2 onions, chopped fine
1 bread slice, crust off, crumbled, soaked in 1 TBS water, then squeezed dry
5 ounces bacon, chopped fine
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS chopped parsley and dill
2 eggs, beaten separately
7 ounces macaroni
ground black pepper
1 TBS butter, melted
lard or oil for greasing
1 TBS bread crumbs
few leaves green lettuce or 2 boiled red beets, sliced, for garnish

Mix meat with onions, bread, bacon, salt, and pepper.
Mix in parsley and dill and 1 egg. Set aside.
Boil the macaroni in salt water until *al dente*.
Rinse with cold water and drain.
Mix macaroni with most of remaining egg (leave about 2 tablespoons for glazing later), pepper, and butter.
Lay a large sheet of foil or plastic wrap (about 20 inches long) on your working surface or table.
Spread the meat mixture on the foil in a ½-inch-thick rectangle, its length three times its width.
Lay the macaroni in the middle of the meat mixture leaving a wide margin.
Roll meat up using the foil, to completely enclose the macaroni with the meat.
Place the rolled meat loaf on a greased baking sheet.
Brush with remaining egg, then sprinkle with bread crumbs.
Bake in a 350°F oven for 40–60 minutes, or until done.
Cut into 2-inch slices, garnish with green lettuce or beets, and serve with a red beet salad or sautéed carrots.

Cornmeal Pudding (Budinca de Malai Dulce)

Cornmeal is an important staple, more popularly eaten in the form of a bland form of cornpone (*mamaliga*). It can also be made into a sweet cake, as here, which is eaten as dessert or a snack.

3 cups cornmeal
1 cup white flour
4 TBS sugar
½ tsp salt
a pinch baking soda
4 TBS oil
3 cups club soda
2 ounces *rahat lokum* (Turkish delight), any flavor, cut into ¼-inch cubes
butter and flour for the pan
vanilla sugar

Mix cornmeal, flour, sugar, salt, baking soda, and oil in a bowl.
Add club soda a little at a time, stirring and ensuring liquid is absorbed before adding more.
After all the club soda has been used up, or the cornmeal is the consistency of porridge, let sit for 10–15 minutes.
Mix in the *rahat lokum*.
Butter and flour a 9×13-inch baking pan.
Pour in cornmeal mixture, leveling the top.
Bake at 350°F until deep golden.
Sprinkle with vanilla sugar.
Allow to cool.
Cut into squares and serve with coffee.

RUSSIA

Russia is the largest country in the world. West of the Urals, the land is characteristically flat or rolling hills, fertile and well watered. East of the Urals sprawls arctic and flat Siberia. Further south are the Karakorum mountain ranges. Generally the climate is cold, with hot summers in the southern regions, and sub-zero winters.

Numerous republics and autonomous areas make up the modern Russian Federation. However, in terms of cuisine, several specific areas interpenetrate one another: Russian cuisine predominates from the shores of the Baltic, through Moscow and St. Petersburg, and ranges from the food of peasants to that of emperors.

Along the Volga River, cuisines are heavily influenced by Tatar forms of cooking and eating. North Caucasus cuisines such as Ossetian and Ingush predominate from the northern Caucasus to the Black Sea. Finno-Ugric people including Finns and Samoyeds have a distinct cuisine in north European Russia. Finally, the frigid tundras, where Tungus and other circumpolar people live, have foods similar to their distant relatives, the Inuit and the North American Athabascan peoples.

Given the cold climate, hearty carbohydrate foods, often cooked in lard or fat, predominate in the lives of ordinary people.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: barley, wheat, buckwheat, and various other grains; potatoes.
- Meat: pork and chicken are most common; also duck, beef.
- Fish: herring, both fresh and pickled; salmon, fresh and smoked; sturgeon, usually smoked; caviar from the Volga River and the Caspian Sea.
- Dairy: milk; sour milk; yogurt; sour cream, which garnishes many dishes including main dishes and soups; cheeses.
- Vegetables: cabbages, beets, potatoes, beans, and peas. Wild vegetables, including mushrooms.
- Fruit: apples and pears, plums, melons from Asian Russia. Wild berries and nuts.

WILD PINE MUSHROOM

Typical Dishes

- *Kasha* (buckwheat porridge) has been the staple for centuries; *pirogi* (stuffed meat pies); *blini* (pancakes topped with caviar and sour cream). Soups such as *schchi* (cabbage soup) and *borscht* (hot or cold vegetable soup).
- Popular main dishes include *pelmeni* (stuffed pasta) with sour cream; *bifstroganov* (beef cooked in sour cream sauce and served over noodles).
- Tea—hot, milkless, and sweetened sometimes by jam—is a major drink, though many people have a fondness for strong drinks, notably vodka made from potatoes, and beer. *Kvass*, a drink made from bread, is also popular (see Lithuania for the box "*Kvass*").

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- Table settings are mostly European standard, but local variations are common.
- Breakfast: bread and butter and jam; *kasha* (buckwheat porridge) with sour cream and cheese; tea or milk.
- Lunch: main meal of the day, consisting of soup with black bread; *zakuski* (appetizers); meat or fish main dish with cooked vegetables; dessert.
- Dinner: salads; cooked vegetables or *zakuski*; tea.
- Snacks: a variety of *zakuski* are served to guests—*blini* (pancakes), pickled fish, hard-boiled eggs, cold meats, caviar, and other small finger foods. A *zakuski* table is the center of hospitality in Russian homes and is always served with plenty of hot tea and vodka.

Buckwheat Pancakes (Blinis)

Buckwheat is more cold resistant than wheat and is therefore an important staple. It is commonly prepared as groats (*kasha*) or, when ground into flour, as pancakes and eaten as an appetizer (see box "Food and Class: Cooking and Cuisine").

½ cup lukewarm water
pinch of sugar
1½ tsp active yeast
1 cup *kasha* (buckwheat) flour (available from Russian or health food stores, or from Japanese stores as soba flour)
1½ cups all-purpose flour
2 cups lukewarm milk
3 egg yolks, slightly beaten
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
½ pound butter, melted and cooled
2 cups sour cream
3 egg whites
1 pound sliced smoked trout, mackerel, salmon, or herring fillets

Mix lukewarm water, a pinch of sugar and the yeast. Set in a warm place for 10 minutes, until the mixture is frothy.

In a large bowl, combine half the buckwheat and all the white flour.

Make a hollow in the center and pour in 1 cup milk and the yeast mixture.
With a wooden spoon, slowly stir the flour into the liquid ingredients, then beat vigorously until the mixture is smooth.
Cover the bowl with a moist towel; set aside in a warm, draft-free place for 3 hours, until the mixture almost doubles in volume.
Stir the batter thoroughly, and beat in the remaining buckwheat flour.
Cover the mixture with a damp towel and let rest in a warm place for another 2 hours.
Stir the batter and gradually beat in egg yolks, salt, sugar, 3 tablespoons melted butter, 3 tablespoons sour cream, and the remaining milk.
Beat egg whites in a large bowl until stiff.
Fold the egg whites gently but thoroughly into the batter.
Cover with a towel, and let the batter rest in a warm place for 30 minutes.
Preheat oven to 200°F.
Lightly coat the bottom of a 10- to 12-inch skillet with melted butter.
Set pan over high heat. Pour in about 2–3 tablespoons batter for each pancake.
Fry only a few at a time (depending on the size of your frying pan).
Cook for 2 or 3 minutes until bubbly; brush the top with butter; turn over and cook another 2 minutes, or until golden brown.
Keep pancakes warm in the oven while making the rest.
Serve *blini* hot, with the remaining butter and sour cream.
Spread each *blini* with melted butter and a slice of smoked fish, then top with sour cream.

Pickled Mushrooms (Marinovannye Griby)

This is another common *zakuski* dish, based on the wild mushrooms collected in the fall from Russia's many forests.

½ cup wine vinegar
1 whole clove
¼ cup cold water
3 whole black peppercorns
1 bay leaf
1 tsp salt
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
½ pound small, fresh mushrooms (champignon or any other variety you fancy), wiped clean
2 TBS vegetable oil

In an enameled or stainless-steel saucepan, combine vinegar, clove, water, peppercorns, bay leaf, salt, and crushed garlic.
Bring to a boil over high heat. Add mushrooms and reduce the heat to low.
Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes, stirring the mushrooms occasionally, then cool to room temperature.
Remove the garlic from the marinade.
Pour the entire contents of the pan into a covered container or jar.
Pour vegetable oil on top to keep out the air, and cover the jar tightly.
Keep in the refrigerator for at least 1 week before eating.
Serve the pickled mushrooms as a *zakuska* or with meat or fish.

Cabbage Soup (Schchi)

Hearty soups are important in Russia's cold winters. *Schchi* may be the main meal of the day, served with plenty of black rye bread. The traditional method of preparing stock is given below, but to save time, use bouillon cubes or canned stock.

Stock

- 2 pounds beef shortribs
- 4 quarts water
- 2 stalks celery
- 6 sprigs parsley
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 large onion, peeled and quartered
- 2 large carrots, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 TBS salt

In a heavy pot, bring beef and water to a boil over high heat.
Skim off any foam that rises.
Add celery, parsley, bay leaves, onion, carrots, and salt, and reduce heat to low.
Simmer for 1–1½ hours, or until meat is tender but not falling apart.
Remove meat from pot, dice, and reserve.
Reduce stock for another 4 hours on low heat.
Strain the stock through a fine sieve or cheesecloth, discarding the bones and vegetables.
Chill for 1–2 hours or ideally overnight, then skim off as much fat as possible.
Alternatively, use 3 beef bouillon cubes dissolved in 6 cups water, or use 6 cups prepared beef stock.

Assembly

- 2 TBS butter
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 small white cabbage, quartered, cored, coarsely shredded
- 4 potatoes, diced
- 1 celery root (celeriac, or substitute 2 stalks celery), peeled and sliced into matchstick strips (julienned)
- 1 parsley root (Hamburg parsley, or substitute 1 parsnip), peeled and sliced into matchstick strips (julienned)
- 1 cup fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
- salt and black pepper to taste

Melt butter in a pot over medium heat. Add onions, and cook until translucent.
Stir in cabbage, potatoes, and celery and parsley roots.
Cover pot, and simmer over low heat for 20 minutes.
Add meat stock, reserved diced beef, and tomatoes.
Simmer for another 15 minutes, and season.
Serve hot with rye bread.

Fish Cakes with Mustard Sauce
(Bitki s Zapravkoi Gorchichnoi)

This may serve as a main dish or as part of a *zakuski* table.

Sauce

2 TBS prepared medium hot mustard (Dijon)
salt and pepper to taste
2 TBS lemon juice
4 TBS vegetable oil
¼ cup parsley, minced
½ cup fresh dill, minced
1 sweet gherkin, chopped

In a blender, combine mustard, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and oil until smooth.
Pour into a covered container and add remaining ingredients.
Refrigerate.

Cakes

4 slices bread
1 cup milk
2 pounds cod or other white-fleshed fish fillet, skinned and finely ground
1 egg, well beaten
1 small onion, minced
¼ cup fresh dill, minced
2 tsp white pepper
salt to taste
flour
about ¼ cup butter
about ¼ cup vegetable oil

Soak bread in milk for about 10 minutes.
Squeeze lightly to remove excess milk; in a large bowl mix thoroughly with the fish, egg, onion, dill, salt, and pepper.
With floured hands, shape into patties about ½-inch thick.
Melt 2 tablespoons butter with 2 tablespoons oil in a heavy pan over medium heat.
Fry only a few of the fish cakes at a time until golden brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels and keep warm in the oven while the rest are being prepared.
Add more butter and oil to the pan, as needed.
Serve hot, spooning sauce over each cake.

FOOD AND CLASS: COOKING AND CUISINE

Every human society cooks at least some of its food. In societies in which there is a great surplus of food, two features appear: cuisine and class differentiation. Social classes that can afford to do so spend much of their resources on elaborating food preparation ("cooking") into a recognized art form involving cooking, which we call "cuisine." Subsistence societies across the world do not have social classes, and cook their food as cheaply and as fast as possible, to save on fuel and working effort, and they do not have access to imported spices or ingredients.

Buckwheat Groats with Mushrooms and Onions (Grechnevaya Kasha)

Hardy buckwheat grain, potatoes, and cabbages were common traditional daily fare. This dish is usually eaten on its own.

- 1 cup coarse buckwheat groats (available from health food stores and Russian stores)
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ cup butter
- 2 to 3 cups boiling water
- 2 cups onion, finely chopped
- ½ pound fresh mushrooms, finely chopped (traditionally, these would be wild forest mushrooms. Or substitute brown or oyster mushrooms, or even fresh *shiitake*)
- salt and black pepper to taste

Dry fry buckwheat in an ungreased heavy lidded pan over low heat, stirring constantly, until the buckwheat is lightly toasted. Take care not to burn.
Stir in salt, 2 tablespoons butter, and 2 cups boiling water.
Cover, reduce the heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes.
If the buckwheat is not yet tender, stir in 1 more cup of boiling water; cook covered for 10 minutes more, or until the water is absorbed and the grains have swelled up.
Remove from heat, uncover, and let the buckwheat stand for about 10 minutes.
Meanwhile, melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium heat.
Add onions and cook until golden.
Stir into the buckwheat.
Heat remaining butter in the skillet over medium heat.
Add mushrooms, salt, and black pepper and sauté for 2 or 3 minutes.
Increase heat, continuing to stir briskly until all the liquid has been absorbed.
Add mushrooms to the buckwheat and onions and mix thoroughly.
Adjust seasoning. Serve at once.

Easter Cheese Cake with Candied Fruit and Nuts (Paskha)

This cheesecake is traditionally the centerpiece of Russian Orthodox Easter celebrations and accompanies *kulich*, the main Easter cake made of nuts and raisins.

- 1 pound large-curd cottage cheese
- ¼ cup chopped candied fruit and orange peel
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ pound unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ¼ cup finely chopped blanched almonds
- ¼ cup whole blanched almonds, toasted, for garnish
- ¼ cup candied fruit and citrus peel, for garnish

Drain the cottage cheese in a cheesecloth-lined colander, cover with plastic wrap, and place a heavy weight (such as a 1-pound can) on top. Let the cheese drain for 2 or 3 hours or overnight in the refrigerator.

Combine candied fruits and vanilla in a covered container, and leave overnight.

In a food processor or blender, process the cheese until fine and smooth.

Blend in the softened butter, and set the mixture aside.

Make a rich custard: heat the cream over low heat in a pan until small bubbles appear on the sides. Remove from heat.

In a mixer, beat yolks and sugar together until thick.

While continuing to beat, slowly add the hot cream; return the mixture to the pan.

Stirring constantly, gently cook on very low heat, or over (not in) hot water, until the mixture thickens. Do not allow the mixture to boil, or it may curdle.

Remove from heat. Stir in the candied fruit and immediately cool the pan in a large bowl filled with cold water and ice cubes.

When the custard is completely cooled, mix gently but thoroughly into the cheese mixture; stir in the chopped almonds.

To form the cake, a traditional mold is customary, but a sieve or colander will do, lined with clean cheesecloth. Set a large bowl underneath to catch the drippings.

Pour in the mixture and fold ends of cheesecloth over the top.

Set a weight on top of the cheesecloth and chill in the refrigerator overnight, until the cake is firm.

Unfold the cheesecloth and invert the cheese mixture on a serving dish.

Remove cheesecloth and decorate cake with almonds and candied fruit.

RWANDA

Rwanda is a small, landlocked eastern African country largely characterized by rolling hills and uplands. The climate is temperate to cool.

The population comprises predominantly the Hutu ethnic group; the rest are Tutsi. Ethnic tensions between the two groups have led to a series of civil wars, and a massacre in 1994, in which more than 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu were killed by extremist Hutu.

The cooking is simple and basic, centered on porridge staples eaten with vegetable sauces.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: sweet potatoes, cassava, beans, corn, peas, millet, and fruit.
- Meat: chicken and beef are preferred (but beef is rarely available); goat. Rural Rwandans rarely eat meat. Some families have cattle, but since cattle are considered a status symbol, people seldom slaughter them except in exceptional circumstances.
- Fish from the lakes, and, more recently, *tilapia* raised on fish farms.
- Dairy: goat and cow milk, soured milks in the countryside.
- Fruit: bananas and plantains, mangoes, avocados, papaya, guavas.

Typical Dishes

- *Umutsima* (cassava and maize porridge staple) is served at most meals; *isombe* (cassava leaves with eggplant and spinach) and *mizuzu* (fried plantains) are common side dishes.
- Drinks: tea, very milky and very sweet; beer.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and many snacks.
- Breakfast: sweet potatoes and porridge (a mixture of sorghum, corn, and millet), mixed with milk. Urban people have bread and tea.
- Lunch and dinner: boiled beans, bananas, sweet potatoes, or cassava.

- Evening meal is the heaviest and may include chicken, goat, or, on rare occassions, beef.
- Snacks: fruits, roasted corn, barbecued meat.
- Beer is a favorite drink for men, and a way to exchange services. Much of the beer consumed is homemade from sorghum (*ikigage*) or bananas (*urwarwa*). Traditionally, beer is drunk through straws from a common large container.

Cassava Leaves and Eggplant (Isombe)

This is often made to accompany the staple porridge.

2 pounds young cassava leaves, washed and chopped (or substitute spinach, Swiss chard, kale, or collard greens)
2 spring onions, chopped
2 medium eggplants, cut into chunks
1 pound spinach, washed and chopped
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and sliced into strips
3 TBS palm oil
3 TBS natural (unsweetened) peanut butter

Boil cassava leaves in water until tender.
Add onions, eggplants, spinach, and green peppers.
Cook on medium heat for 10 minutes.
Add palm oil. Mix a few tablespoons of the cooking liquid with the peanut butter in a small bowl until diluted. Add diluted peanut butter to cooking greens and stir in well.
Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Serve with *umutsima*.

Beef Stew

Meat is a rarity for the majority of Rwandans, and is usually served only on special occasions or when guests are expected.

2 TBS oil
1 pound stewing beef, cut in 1-inch cubes
1 medium onion, chopped
3 plantains (or green bananas if plantains are not available), peeled and cut into quarters, drizzled lightly with lemon juice to prevent browning
3 TBS tomato paste
salt and hot chili powder to taste
water as needed

Heat oil over medium heat, and brown meat and onion in a heavy pot.
Add plantains, reduce heat, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add tomato paste and season to taste.

(*continued*)

Cover mixture with water and simmer, covered, for 1 hour, or until meat is tender.
Add extra water if needed during cooking.
Serve with cooked beans and *ugali*.

Fried Plantains (Mizuzu)

This is a common snack sold by street vendors in urban areas.

oil for deep-frying
2 large semi-ripe plantains, peeled and cut into ½-inch disks (or 4 unripe bananas)
¼ cup sugar

Heat enough oil for deep frying in a deep pot.
Slide plantains, a few at a time, and fry until golden brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels.
Sprinkle with sugar. Serve hot or cold.

SAMOA

Samoa comprises two relatively large islands, Upolu and Savaii (which account for approximately 96 percent of the total land area), and eight smaller islands. The islands are volcanic and are dominated by rugged mountain ranges with a fringe of coral reefs and lagoons that surround the islands. The climate is tropical, moderated by cooling trade winds, which keep the temperature comfortable for most of the year.

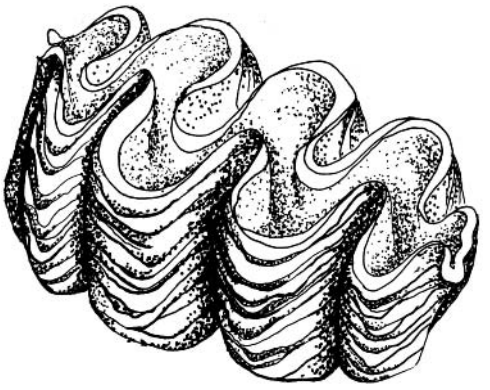
The population is largely Polynesian, with some Chinese, European, and East Indian immigrants. Traditional diet relied heavily on starches such as taro and breadfruit, and on coconuts and fish, but has been modified by introductions from European cuisine (including items such as canned corned beef), Chinese and Indian foods. The cornerstone of social life, including food, is the clan, which controls land and fishing rights and within which food is often shared. Many Samoans have relocated to New Zealand and the United States, and have, as a consequence, affected and modified the diet, bringing in a demand for sweet foods (cookies and cakes) and drinks (sodas, coffee).

Foodstuffs

- Starches: breadfruit, taro, sweet potatoes; more recently, wheat bread, cakes, and cookies.
- Meat: pork is the favorite meat. Also chicken, corned beef, wild game such as pigeons, duck, and bats.
- Fish: flying fish, tuna, reef fish such as parrot fish and grouper, octopus, squid, and other cephalopods, clams, oysters, and crustaceans.
- Vegetables: cassava and taro leaves.
- Fruit: coconut, both young and mature; bananas; native oranges and limes.

Typical Dishes

- Chicken baked in banana leaves (*taisi moa*), in an earth oven.
- Grilled foods: chargrilled chicken (*moa tunupau*), wild pigeon (*lupe tunuvilivili*), flying fox (*pea tunuvilivili*), pig (*puaa tunuvilivili*).
- Octopus in coconut milk (*faiai fee*), grilled fish in coconut milk (*vaisu*), and coconut and fish soup (*sua ia*).
- Introduced foods such as *sapasui* (chop suey).



GIANT CLAM

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- People in traditional households eat together on a mat around the dishes and bowls of food, eating with their fingers. Urban households tend to eat at a table in modified European settings.
- Breakfast may be leftovers from previous day; *poi*; or, increasingly, bread or rolls, sometimes fried.
- Main meal is in the afternoon, consisting of starch; salad, fresh or pickled, or grilled fish or seafood; meat or chicken if available.
- Evening meal is a lighter one.
- Important events are celebrated by traditional feasts of food—taro, yams, bananas, fish, meat—cooked in an *umu* (earth oven) and shared by an entire extended family or clan.

Raw Fish in Coconut Milk (Oka I'a)

Like most Oceanian islanders, Samoans are heavily dependent on fresh fish. These are often eaten raw. Make sure you use only absolutely fresh fish for this dish.

1½ pounds fish meat, any firm fish (of sashimi quality) such as tuna, snapper, jack, boned and skinned, cut into bite-sized slices (or substitute *surimi* mock crab)
1 cup coconut milk
½ cup water
½ cup onions, chopped
½ cup crabmeat, flaked
½ cup cucumber, shredded
salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl.
Refrigerate for ½ to 1 hour.
Serve as an appetizer or side dish with boiled taro or yam.

Corned Beef Packages (Luau Pisupo)

As in many places in the world, corned or other canned meat introduced by European traders have become favored foodstuffs in their own right and have been incorporated into local cuisines. This is traditionally baked in an *umu* (earth oven).

1 can corned beef (*pisupo*)
1 cup onions, chopped
black pepper to taste
12 young taro leaves
butter or oil for greasing, as needed
4 large (10×10-inch) foil sheets

Mix *pisupo*, onions, and black pepper well.
Select 3 taro leaves of different sizes. Place the largest on the palm of your cupped hand.
Layer the other two in gradated size (if you have no taro leaves, use greased individual ramekins or custard cups).
Fill leaf layer with ¼ of the corned beef mixture. Fold securely.
Repeat for remaining mixture and leaves.
Wrap leaves in aluminum foil sheets to make well-sealed packages.
Bake in a 350°F oven for about 30 minutes.
Serve with baked coconut milk (see the next recipe).

Baked Coconut Milk (Luau Palusami)

This is a side dish served with grilled fish or meat.

2 cups thick coconut milk
2 onions, grated
salt to taste
water as needed
12 young taro leaves
4 large (10×10-inch) foil sheets

Place coconut milk in a deep casserole dish. Bake at low heat until golden brown on top, about 30 minutes.
Remove from the oven and raise oven heat to 420°F.
Break up the cream and add onion, salt, and some water, if necessary, to make a well-blended doughy mixture, mixing well.
Select 3 taro leaves of different sizes. Place the largest on the palm of your cupped hand.
Layer the other two in gradated size (if you have no taro leaves, use greased individual ramekins or custard cups).
Fill leaf layer with ¼ of the mixture. Fold securely.
Repeat for the remaining coconut mixture and leaves.
Wrap leaves in large squares of aluminum foil to make well-sealed packages.
Bake in a 350°F oven for about 30 minutes.
Serve with fish, *pisupo*, or cooked breadfruit.

Cooked Bananas (Fa'alifu Fa'I)

This can be served as a side dish with meat or fish.

4 large green bananas, peeled
water as needed
2 cups coconut milk
1 cup onion, chopped
salt to taste

Place bananas in a pot with water to barely cover.
Bring water to a boil, simmer until bananas are tender, about 15 minutes.

(*continued*)

Drain and discard water.
In a saucepan, place bananas, and add coconut milk, onion, and salt.
Mix well.
Place over low heat and simmer until coconut milk has thickened to your liking.

Samoan Cookies (Masi Samoa *or* Keke Faasaina)

Samoans were introduced to sweet cookies and other sweet foods by missionaries, visitors, and returning emigrants.

8 ounces butter or margarine
2 cups sugar
3 eggs
1 cup coconut milk
2 tsp vanilla extract
5 tsp baking powder
2½ pounds flour
oil or butter for greasing

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Cream butter with sugar until light.
Add eggs, coconut milk, and vanilla. Mix well.
Sift baking powder and flour, then add to egg mixture. Mix thoroughly, then knead for 5 minutes in the bowl, adding flour if necessary to make a rollable dough.
Roll out on a floured surface to about ¼-inch thick.
Cut into squares or lozenges.
Place cookies on a greased cookie sheet, well separated.
Bake until brown on both sides.

SAN MARINO

One of the smallest countries in Europe (and the world), San Marino occupies a mountain top (Mount Titano) and some surrounding fields in the Apennine Mountains, completely surrounded by Italy. It is the last remnant of the many city-states that dotted the Italian landscape during the Renaissance period.

Food is largely similar to that of surrounding Emilia Romagna, but the San Marinese are fiercely proud of their independence, so the foods are declared "San Marinese."

Foodstuffs

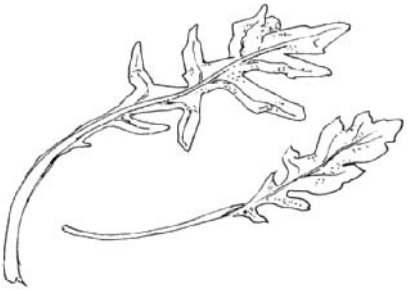
- Staples include rice, wheat pasta, potatoes.
- Favorite meats are beef (particularly veal) and pork. Chicken and other poultry.
- Vegetables include tomatoes (fresh and dried), potatoes, lettuce, arugula, beans, zucchini, artichokes, onions, and garlic.
- Fruit include citrus fruit, melons and watermelons, apples, pears and peaches, strawberries and figs, grapes.
- Milk products include soft cheeses and butter.
- Flavor principles include tomatoes, peppers, garlic, and bay leaves. Butter is the most common oil.

Typical Dishes

- Croquettes (*crocchette*), pork cooked in milk, cornmeal cake (*bustrengo*), braised beef heart, cheese puddings.
- Pasta is often eaten, doused with butter or cream sauces.
- A variety of soups.
- A variety of pastries and breads.
- Wine and mineral water are commonly drunk by all during main meals. Coffee is drunk in great quantities and in various forms, by most adults during the day.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- Families generally eat together, at least on weekends.



ROCKET

- Breakfast: fresh bread or rolls, butter, and large cups of milky coffee.
- Lunch: a main meal, which usually consists of several courses finished by dessert and cheese. This is washed down by wine and mineral water.
- Evening meal: usually a multicourse meal.
- Many short breaks for tiny cups of coffee are the norm.
- Cafes serve coffee and many kinds of pastry during all hours of the day and in the evening.

Croquettes (Crocchette)

This makes a quick meal for the evening or a snack during the day.

2 potatoes, boiled, skinned, and mashed
¼ tsp nutmeg
1 TBS parsley
salt and pepper to taste
1 onion, chopped fine
2 ounces fresh or frozen, thawed, and drained spinach, chopped
2 ounces mortadella cheese, chopped
2 ounces Grana Padano or Parmesan cheese, grated
6 slices white bread, crusts removed, soaked in 1 cup milk, then squeezed
3 eggs, beaten
4 TBS flour,
1 cup bread crumbs
oil for frying

Mix mashed potatoes with nutmeg, parsley, salt, and pepper.
Add onion, spinach, cheeses, bread, and 1 egg.
Mix well.
Form into 1×2-inch rolls and roll each in flour, then the remaining eggs, then in bread crumbs.
Heat about 1 inch of oil in a large frying pan.
Fry the croquettes, a few at a time, until golden on both sides.
Drain on paper towels, and keep warm while preparing the rest.
Serve at once.

Pork in Milk (Maiale al Latte)

This makes a main meal dish.

3 ounces lean ham, chopped
2 pounds ground pork
2 sprigs (each about 6 inches long) rosemary
4 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
4 TBS olive oil
4 cups milk
¼ tsp cinnamon
2 ounces butter
2 TBS flour

Mix ham and meat. Add garlic, rosemary, salt, and pepper, and mix well.
Form into a single large patty.
Heat olive oil in an ovenproof deep frying pan, then fry patty on one side until golden underneath.
Reduce heat, and add milk and cinnamon.
Place uncovered in a hot (400°F) oven.
Bake for around 40 minutes uncovered.
After 40 minutes, check meat. When the juices run clear, remove from oven.
If not bake for another 5–10 minutes. Remove meat from pan and keep warm.
Make a gravy from the pan juices: heat butter in a separate pan. Sprinkle flour, mixing constantly to absorb the butter. Cook until flour is light brown.
Add the pan juices, a tablespoon at a time, continuing to whisk briskly, until a thick sauce is formed. Add the remaining juices.
Simmer for 10–15 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon, until fairly thick.
Slice meat loaf. Discard rosemary if possible. Pour sauce over meat and serve.

Cornmeal Cake (Bustrengo)

Traditionally, this was cooked in the fireplace in a covered copper pan heaped with coals.

½ cup fine cornmeal
1 cup plain flour
1 tsp salt
½ cup fresh bread crumbs
3 eggs, beaten
¼ cup olive oil
1 cup honey
1 pint milk
½ cup seedless raisins
½ cup dried figs, diced
1 pound firm apples, peeled, cored, and diced
grated rind of 1 lemon
grated rind of 1 orange
olive oil or butter for greasing

Mix cornmeal and flour with salt and bread crumbs.
Make a hollow in the center, and add eggs and oil, stirring well.
Add honey and milk, and mix well.
Add the fruits and rind.
Place the mixture in a greased 2-quart baking dish.
Bake at 320°F for 50–60 minutes until the top is golden and cake tests done.
Cool, cut, and serve.

SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

São Tomé e Príncipe are part of a group of two small and several smaller islands in the Gulf of Guinea, near the coast of West Africa. The terrain is mountainous and volcanic, and the climate is hot and humid. Farmers raise beans, coconuts, cocoa, spices, sweet potatoes, poultry, and fruit.

Like many islands on the West Coast of Africa, São Tomé e Príncipe had been a Portuguese colony, and, as a consequence, a mix of West African and Portuguese cuisines became the local style. The population are descendants of African slaves brought to cultivate sugarcane and tobacco. Many foods reveal Portuguese influence either in the ingredients (olive oil and European herbs) or in the preparation methods. Soufflés and sweet cakes are very common.

Foodstuffs

- The staple is sweet potato. Bananas and plantains are a major source of energy. Maize and cassava are also eaten.
- Meat: goat and chicken.
- Fish: marine fish from the surrounding seas; shellfish and snails.
- Vegetables: cabbages, beans, sweet potato, pumpkin, cassava leaves and shoots, onions and chilies, peanuts as snacks and flavoring.
- Fruit: coconuts, mangoes, guavas, bananas, papaya.

Typical Dishes

- Sweet potato and eggs cooked into soufflés.
- Flavored rice (*riz creole*) cooked with fish or meat.
- Drinks: coffee, coconut water, soft drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- Traditional rural families eat around pots of shared food on a mat. Urban families eat around a table, with fork and spoon.

- Breakfast: leftovers, or bread or rolls, or cold baked potatoes washed down with coffee.
- Lunch: main meal of the day, with a meat or fish dish.
- Evening meal: similar to lunch, with or without a meat dish, depending on resources.
- Snacks: street vendors or bakeries prepare local versions of Portuguese baked goods.

Sweet Potato Soufflé
(Soufflé de Batata Doce)

This is a common side dish served with meat.

2 pounds sweet potatoes
2 eggs, separated
salt and black pepper to taste

Place potatoes in water to cover and cook for 20 minutes or until done. Drain and let cool.
Heat oven to 350°F.
Peel potatoes and mash with egg yolks. Season to taste.
Beat egg whites into soft peaks and fold into potatoes.
Butter an ovenproof 2-quart casserole and spoon in the mixture.
Bake for 25–30 minutes.
Cool to room temperature and serve with roasted meat.

Sweet Potato Omelet
(Omeleta com Batata Doce)

This is a common supper dish eaten by many households.

6 eggs, beaten
½ cup milk
1 garlic clove, minced
2 sweet potatoes, peeled and grated
1 tsp salt
2 TBS olive oil

Mix the eggs, milk, garlic, and sweet potatoes. Add salt and mix well.
Heat oil in an ovenproof skillet.
Add the potato mixture.
Cook covered for 10 minutes on low heat until brown underneath.
Place under a grill for a further 2–3 minutes or until golden brown.
Serve hot.

Banana Puree (Angu de Banana)

Bananas are a major staple, and most rural households cultivate both bananas and plantains.

4 green bananas (unpeeled)
juice of ½ lemon
salt and pepper to taste

Place unpeeled bananas in a large pot.
Cover with water, bring to a boil, and simmer for 15 minutes or until soft.
Remove from water and cool.
Peel and mash with fork to a puree.
Season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice.
Serve with fish or meat.

Creole Rice (Riz Crioulo)

Rice is imported as a luxury, a taste the São Toméans received from the Portuguese.

1 tsp salt
3 quarts water
2 cups rice
1 large onion, chopped
3 carrots, peeled and chopped
1 TBS butter
½ cup fish or clam broth
½ pound cooked flaked or shredded meat (chicken, turkey, beef, or pork; leftovers are fine)
salt and pepper to taste

Salt water and bring to a boil.
Add rice, onion, and carrots.
Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes.
Transfer rice and vegetables to a bowl; discard the cooking water.
To the rice, add butter; stir until melted, and allow to cool.
Cover and refrigerate overnight for flavors to develop.
When ready to serve, heat fish broth, add rice mixture and flaked meat.
Mix thoroughly, add salt and pepper, and cook over low heat until all liquid has been absorbed.

Fish Stew (Calulu de Peixe)

Calulu is traditionally served for feasts and special days.

2 pounds fillets of firm fish (grouper, jack)
1 tsp salt
juice of 1 lemon

1 onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium eggplant, peeled, cut into ½-inch slices
10 ounces greens (young pumpkin leaves, spinach, kale)
1 large tomato
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
8 okra pods, stems trimmed, pods left whole
1 bay leaf
½ cup palm or olive oil
4 TBS flour
1 sprig basil

Season fish with salt and lemon, set aside for 20 minutes to 1 hour.
Place chopped onions, garlic, eggplant, greens (see note below), tomato, peppers, okra, and bay leaf in a heavy pot.
Pour oil over all, cover, and bring to boil.
Stir with wooden spoon and cook for 5 minutes.
Add fish and enough water to cover.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until fish is done, for about 20 minutes.
Mix flour with a tablespoon of the broth, then add to pot.
Stir well, simmering for 5 minutes or until sauce is thickened.
Add the sprig of basil.
Serve with *angu de banana*.
Note: If using spinach, add leaves just before fish is done.

Fried Papaya (Mamão Frito)

This can be served as a side dish with meat; or, sprinkled liberally with confectioners' sugar, as a snack or dessert.

1 large papaya (not too ripe), peeled, halved, seeds removed and discarded
1 egg, beaten
3 TBS bread crumbs
vegetable oil for frying

Cut papaya into slices 3×2 inches, ¼-inch thick.
Dip slices into beaten egg and then in bread crumbs.
Heat oil in a frying pan, and fry the papaya slices until golden on both sides.
Drain on paper towels and keep warm while frying the rest.
Serve hot.

SAUDI ARABIA

A large desert kingdom with plenty of oil fields, Saudi Arabia enjoys a high standard of living. The climate is harsh and dry with great temperature extremes between night and day. The southern mountainous areas are a bit cooler. Though agriculture is not commonly practiced outside the Asir area in the south, supermarkets and shops provide imported fresh produce and food. Food, except for when entertaining guests, or during the festivities of the month of Ramadan, tends to be simple (see box "Ramadan").

Saudi Arabia is a strictly Muslim country, which frowns on the practice of other religions. The major festival is Eid al Fitr at the end of Ramadan. The purchase or drinking of alcohol is strictly forbidden and severely punished.

Foodstuffs

- Meat, particularly lamb and camel, and cracked wheat (bulghur), rice, lentils and chickpeas are the main staples.
- Chicken and eggs.
- Wild meats, including antelope, rabbits, bustards, quail.

RAMADAN

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar, starts with the appearance of the first crescent moon. From that time on, for one month, Muslims do not eat nor drink during the daytime. People bless one another with "Ramadan Mubarak!" (Blessed Ramadan!).

During Ramadan, Muslims eat an early morning meal before daybreak, called *suhoor*. Traditionally, this meal includes a porridge of barley and some dates, recommended by the Prophet Muhammad, and no salt, to limit the need for water during the day. After nightfall, a snack is eaten before evening prayers, and then a full meal, *iftar*, which is more substantive and often includes stews and sweet dishes.

The end of Ramadan is marked by the Concluding Festival (Eid el Fitr), which in many places includes music and singing. Ramadan is celebrated by Muslims all over the world, and not unnaturally, the specific foods differ according to location.

EATING WITH HANDS

Eating with one's hand or hands is a proper way of eating in some cultures in the Middle East, Africa, Oceania, and some areas of Southeast Asia. Like any other kind of dining, this has cultural rules attached to it. In virtually all Muslim countries, one eats from shared and individual dishes using one's *right* hand only: a religious proscription forbids the use of the left. In some cultures (e.g., among Bedouins) only the tips of the fingers are to be used. In virtually all such cultures, licking one's hand or fingers, or plunging the whole of the hand into a shared dish, is forbidden. In all such cultures some means is made available to wash hands before and after the meal.

- Various greens collected from the wild in the winter and spring, including hyssop, mallows, and manna.
- Vegetable salads of tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, peppers.
- Thickened yogurt and soft cheeses.
- Pocket breads and flat breads (*khubz*).

Typical Dishes

- Grilled skewered meats of lamb and chicken, also of camel, mutton, and goat, are highly popular as snacks and as main dishes.
- A common dish is a *mansaf*: rice mounded on flat bread, with meat and ghee or sauce poured over the rice.
- Rice cooked with meat and dried fruit (*aroz Saudi*); rice porridge with milk and lamb (*saliq*); rice balls stuffed with ground meat (*kubbat maraq*); 3-layered rice with almonds and meat (*fi qa'atah*).
- Lamb or chicken stuffed with rice and spices cooked in an underground oven (*al mandi*); lamb or chicken grilled on hot stones (al mathbi).
- Spiced wheat and milk (*jarish*) with onions, or with meat (*mufallaq*).
- Stuffed pies (*samboosak*); flat savory wheat pastry topped with lamb, onions, and tahina, somewhat resembling a pizza (*aish bel lahm*).
- Vegetable and meat soups (*shorba*); fresh vegetable salads; eggplant and yogurt mash.
- Sweets of dates, honey, and nuts, or sweet porridge (*muhallabia*).

Styles of Eating

- Family dining tends to be less formal, with men and women of the same family sometimes eating together. In traditional households, the main dish(es) are brought in and served either on a low table or on a mat, with everyone sharing from the dishes which are placed in the center. Food is eaten from a common dish or bowl, using the three middle fingers of the right hand only or scoops of flat bread. When there are guests, males eat separately and before women, who get the men's leavings.
- Breakfast is simple: flat bread with yogurt and/or cheese, olives or other pickles.
- Lunch is the main meal, with appetizers (*mezze*), soup, salad or pickled vegetables (olives, turnips, etc.), flat bread, a meat dish, usually skewered meat or

kebabs served with tomatoes, onions and other vegetables, fruit and coffee to finish the meal.
- The evening meal is a light meal, unless there are guests.
- Coffee (black and bitter) and tea (very sweet) are popular drinks, as is water, particularly that from specific wells or water sources. Imported fruit juices and international soda drinks are in high demand.
- In restaurants in major cities, international cooking (French, Italian, Japanese, Thai, Chinese, Indian, etc.) can be found, including American fast food.

Saudi Rice (Aroz Saudi)

This is a one-dish meal, usually served on a large platter, for several diners to share for dinner (see box "Eating with Hands").

2 TBS butter
1 pound lean meat (lamb, preferably), cut into ½-inch cubes
½ tsp cloves
½ tsp cinnamon
1 TBS powdered cardamom
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
3 cups boiling water
¼ cup onion, chopped
1 TBS garlic, crushed
2 TBS tomato paste
3 cups rice, soaked in water for 15 minutes, then drained
½ cup raisins
¼ cup almonds, toasted
¼ cup pine nuts

Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a stewing pot. Brown meat on all sides and season with cloves, cinnamon, cardamom, salt, and pepper.
Add water, cover and let simmer for 1 hour, until meat is tender.
In a frying pan, heat the remaining butter. Stir-fry onion and garlic till golden.
Add onion and garlic to meat and broth; add tomato paste and bring to a boil.
Stir in rice and raisins.
Reduce heat to lowest, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes. Let rice rest covered, undisturbed for 10 minutes.
Turn rice into serving bowl and garnish with almonds and pine nuts.
Serve with plain yogurt and mixed green salad.

Roast Stuffed Kid or Lamb (Kharoof Mahshi)

The Saudi national dish is usually made with lamb, and is served at most major events. It is given here together with a chicken version (in parentheses).

1 15-pound whole kid or lamb (or 1 2-pound chicken), rinsed inside and out
3½ tsp (1 tsp) salt
½ tsp (2 pinches) coarsely ground black pepper
2 TBS (1 tsp) cilantro, minced

1 tsp (¼ tsp) candied ginger, minced fine
2 cups onions (1 small onion), minced fine
4 cups (1 cup) cooked rice
2 cups (¼ cup) pistachio nuts, chopped
½ cup (2 TBS) almonds, chopped
1½ cups (2 TBS) sultana raisins
1 cup (2 TBS) ghee or melted butter

Mix the salt, pepper, cilantro, and ginger with a quarter of the onion.
Rub the lamb or chicken inside and out with this mixture.
Mix rice with nuts, raisins, and the remaining onion.
Stuff the cavity of the lamb or chicken with rice mixture. Sew the opening shut or seal with small metal skewers or toothpicks.
Place meat on a grid in a large enough baking pan.
Brush ghee over it and roast in a 300°F oven until meat is very tender and well browned, about 4½ hours for the lamb, 2 hours for the chicken. Baste frequently with pan drippings.
Serve whole, or better still, cut into serving-size pieces, on a large warmed dish on a layer of flat breads, for diners to help themselves with their right hands.

Bread with Meat (Aish Bel-Lahm, *also* Aysh Abu Laham)

This is a kind of Saudi pizza, eaten as a snack or as part of a quick meal during the day.

1 TBS yeast
½ cup warm water
4 cups flour
3 eggs, well beaten
3 TBS vegetable oil
1 tsp salt
½ tsp mixed ground black pepper and cumin
3 TBS corn oil to grease tray
1 TBS poppy seeds

Dissolve yeast in ½ cup warm water and set aside in a warm place until frothy.
Put flour in a large bowl, make a hollow in the center, and add yeast, eggs, oil, salt, and spices.
Mix well, adding more water if needed to make a firm dough.
Oil a large baking tray, and place dough on it, covered with a damp cloth. Let dough rise in a warm place for at least 2 hours.
On a floured surface, roll out into circles about 6–8 inches in diameter, and about ¼- to ⅓-inch thick.
Spread with the meat topping, leaving about an inch margin all around.
Sprinkle with poppy seeds, and place in a 350°F oven for half an hour or until dough is done.

(*continued*)

Meat Topping

¾ pound ground beef or lamb
2 onions, cleaned and finely chopped
2 black peppercorns
2 tsp salt
½ pound leeks, finely chopped
6 TBS *tahina* (sesame sauce)
juice of ½ lemon
6 TBS water
½ tsp ground black pepper

In a saucepan simmer ground beef, onion, peppercorns, and salt over medium heat, until meat is cooked. Set aside until cool; discard peppercorns.
Spread leeks on a paper towel to absorb excess water. Add leeks to ground meat mixture.
Mix *tahina* with lemon juice, a little water, and ground black pepper.
Mix tahina mixture with egg beater or mixer, adding water gradually until it is a smooth, thick cream.
Add to leek and meat mixture, mixing thoroughly.

Wheat Soup (Shorobat al-Jereesh)

This serves as a fast-breaker for Ramadan, the month of fasting.

2 TBS olive oil
2 onions, finely chopped
¾ pound chicken, beef, or lamb, cut into bite-sized cubes
5 cups water
6 tomatoes, peeled (or equivalent canned tomatoes), blended to puree
1½ tsp cinnamon (reserve ½ tsp for garnish)
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
½ cup bulghur (cracked wheat)

Heat oil in a large saucepan and fry onions until translucent.
Add meat and fry until brown.
Add water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until meat is tender.
Add tomatoes, cinnamon, salt, pepper, and bulghur.
Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about 30 minutes, until bulghur is tender.
Pour soup into a tureen, and sprinkle with cinnamon.
Serve as a starter after the fast.

Meat Pies (Samboosak al Saudi)

These meat pies are a feature all around the Middle East. They are eaten as snacks in the afternoon, or for a quick meal at any time.

3 cups flour
1 tsp mixed fennel seed and poppy seed
salt to taste
½ tsp yeast
3 TBS oil
1 cup water
2 onions, grated
1 pound ground beef or lamb
1 tsp ground black pepper
1 tsp cumin powder
oil for deep-frying

Make the dough: put flour in a deep bowl.
Add mixed seeds, salt, and yeast.
Mix in oil and blend thoroughly into the flour mixture with your fingers or a mixer using a dough hook.
Add water a little at a time, mixing thoroughly until mixture forms a dough.
On a floured surface, knead dough for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Divide dough into 12 pieces, lay on an oiled tray, cover with a moist cloth, and leave in a warm place for 1 hour to rise.
Meanwhile, prepare the filling. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a frying pan. Sauté onions until translucent.
Add meat, salt to taste, pepper, and cumin, stirring over medium heat until meat is browned. Set aside and cool.
To assemble pastries: roll out each piece of dough in very thin (about 1/16-inch) circles.
Place a tablespoon of meat on one-half of each pastry circle.
Fold the other half over the filling, making a crescent. Seal edges with a fork or fingers, pressing down well. Repeat with remaining pastry and filling.
Heat the oil in a deep pan and deep-fry a few *samboosak* at a time until brown on both sides.
Serve hot.

Sweet Dumplings (Looqemat)

These are served with coffee or tea.

3 cups flour
¼ tsp salt
⅔ cup yogurt
water as needed
2 tsp yeast
½ tsp sugar
½ cup warm water
oil for frying

Mix flour, salt, yogurt, and sufficient water to make a thick batter. Leave aside, covered, for 6 hours.
Mix yeast with sugar and warm water; leave in a warm place to rise for 10 minutes.
Add yeast to the batter and mix well. Let rest for 3 hours until doubled in volume.
Heat oil in a deep pan.

(*continued*)

With two spoons, shape batter into little balls, about 1½ inches in diameter, and slip 3 or 4 at a time into the oil.
Fry until golden brown.
Remove from oil and drain on paper towels.
Soak in syrup and serve hot.

Aml al Sheera (Syrup)

1 cup water
2 cups sugar
juice of half a lemon
1 TBS rosewater

In a pan over medium heat, bring water and sugar to a boil, skimming the froth.
Add lemon juice and leave to simmer for 10 minutes; remove from heat.
Add rosewater.

SENEGAL

A West African country completely surrounding The Gambia, Senegal was a former colony of France. Rolling plains and a tropical climate enable subsistence farming of millet, rice, and other cereals, vegetables, cattle, and poultry.

The population comprises the Wolof ethnic group and several other groups. Majority are Muslims, so pork and alcohol are formally forbidden.

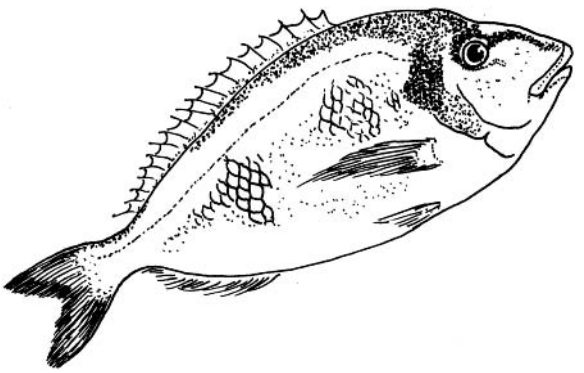
The cuisine focuses largely on fish and is strongly influenced by European, Lebanese, and Asian cooking in the cities. Senegalese food has also influenced neighboring countries' cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Millet is the traditional staple food crop in the countryside outside the river valleys. Millet couscous is also a great favorite. Maize-based couscous is the staple in the south. Rice has become the main starch under French influence, though the Senegalese prefer broken rice to whole grains.
- Meat: goat or mutton; chicken is considered a luxury by many; guinea fowl.
- Fish: dorado, tuna, bonito, sardines, grouper (often used for *ceebu jen*, the national dish), mullet.
- Vegetables: carrots, cabbages, turnips, cassava and cassava leaves, okra, eggplant, peanuts.
- Fruit: mangoes, grapefruit, papaya, oranges, *corossols* (soursop), guava, watermelon, mandarin, passion fruit, mads (a local fruit containing large seeds wrapped in a pulp), *cayor* cherry, jujube, *néré* pod, wild dates, *bouyé* (baobab fruit, also called monkey fist), imported bananas and pineapples.
- Bread, like rice, introduced by the French during the colonial period, is extremely popular, particularly in urban areas, but is expensive for most Senegalese since wheat must be imported.
- Oil is considered important, and oily dishes desirable, as a sign of well being and wealth. Flavorings: stock cubes, smoked or dried fish and snails (sometimes called "Senegalese cheese") for special occasions and guests, *nététou* (fermented grains from the néré tree), tamarind, *beuc* (sorrel leaf sauce), *diwu* (fermented ghee).

Typical Dishes

- Fish dishes: the national dish is *ceebu jen*, fish and rice simmered in tomato sauce, spices, and vegetables; *kaldou*, a dish originating in the Casamance area, is a lemon-flavored sauce made with fish, eaten with rice; *poisson à la saint-louisianian* is baked stuffed mullet flavored with parsley, bay leaf, coriander, and tomatoes.
- Popular cooking styles are *mafé*, a thick peanut sauce enriched with whatever meat is handy; *thiou*, characterized by a light sauce prepared with palm oil and enriched with vegetables; and *yassa* (rice, onions, and meat or fish).
- The city of Saint Louis's specialties include fish and rice; *poulet yassa* (chicken); and Saint Louis hamburger (a hollowed-out bakery roll topped with a meat patty, fried egg, French fries, lettuce, tomato ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise and hot chili sauce). *Poulet yassa*, originally from the Casamance area, has pieces of chicken (or fish or pork) filled with a spiced stuffing (bay leaf, garlic, peeled onions), marinated in lemon juice and mustard, and cooked with lots of onions. It is served with white rice.
- Rice dishes: *ceebu yapp*, beef and rice served with onion sauce on the side; *ceebu ketiakh*, rice cooked with smoked fish; *supukanj*, rice with okra sauce, palm oil, and vegetables.
- *Bassi sallete* is a rich sauce with peanut paste; *couscous mboum* is a thick sauce with cabbage, peanut paste, and fresh or smoked fish. Most of the time meat is long simmered, but street vendors and *dibiterie* (stalls) sell skewers of beef and lamb grilled over charcoal.
- Snacks: *gnama-gnama*, roasted peanuts and cashews; *pastels*, small fritters filled with fish and vegetables, served with onion and tomato sauce; *acra*, millet or wheat fritters; *niébé*, bean fritters; fruit (green mango cut in slices, sprinkled with salt and spices that vendors sell during a short period of the year); avocado with concentrated milk and sugar.
- Lebanese fast food is popular for eating out: *fatayers* (meat-filled fritters); *shawarma* (wraps of grilled meat, French fries, tomatoes, onions, and a sesame based sauce); and other specialties.
- Drinks: international sodas; local drinks include *bissap* juice, tamarind juice, and ginger drink sold by street vendors; fruit juices. Tea and coffee.



DORADO (GILT HEAD BREAM)

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day for those who can afford them. The poverty of many families in urban and rural areas does not always allow the preparation of even two varied meals per day.
- Food is eaten in common from a central dish or bowl, with diners helping themselves with the three fingers of the right hand only.
- Rice will be served at lunch and millet at dinner for those who can afford it, both with seasonal spices and vegetables and/or fish, when available.

- Millet-based couscous, slightly soured, is eaten in the evenings and mornings. Mashed cooked millet grains (*araw* or *karaw*) eaten with sour milk (*lakh*) and a peanut-based sauce; *bouyé* (baobab fruit).

Senegalese Milk Drink (Sow)

In Senegal, this is made by letting fresh cow's milk sit outside to sour, then mixing it with lots of sugar and ice.

4 cups buttermilk
1 cup yogurt
½ cup sour cream
sugar to taste
1 TBS vanilla extract
12 or more ice cubes

Combine all ingredients in a blender and mix well.
Place ice cubes in 4 glasses, pour the drink, and serve.

White Fish on Black-Eyed Peas Appetizer (L'Assiette des Assiettes)

L'Assiette des Assiettes means the "dish of dishes." This dish features as a starter in every good city restaurant. The sauce can be varied according to taste.

Dressing

½ cup tomato ketchup
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
¼ cup white vinegar
1½ TBS sugar
¼ cup onion, minced fine

For Each Person Dining

2 lettuce leaves
3 TBS cooked black-eyed peas
3 square pieces cooked firm-fleshed fish (haddock or halibut or cod), about ⅓ pound
2 tomato slices
3 cucumber slices
1–2 pieces heart of palm (or substitute celery or cold white asparagus)
½ hard-boiled egg, sliced into quarters

Combine and mix well the dressing ingredients in a bowl. Allow to sit for at least ½ hour.
On a dinner plate, arrange a bed of lettuce leaves. Pile cooked black-eyed peas in the center. Place pieces of fish on the peas. Surround with tomato, cucumber, heart of palm, and slices of egg.
Drizzle with 2 to 3 tablespoons of dressing.
Serve chilled as a starter.

Peanut and Meat Stew (Mafé)

Mafé is a style of stew that can be prepared with a variety of ingredients, provided the sauce is thick and is based on peanuts.

2 TBS peanut oil
1 large onion, chopped fine
1 pound stewing meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
½ cup natural (unsweetened) peanut butter
1 cup cold water
⅓ cup tomato paste
1½ cups hot water
4 large carrots, scraped and chopped into 1-inch pieces
3 sprigs fresh thyme
2 bay leaves
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan. Sauté onion over medium heat until translucent.
Add meat and brown on all sides.
Mix peanut butter with cold water in a bowl, whisk until absorbed and pour over meat.
Dilute tomato paste with half the hot water. Add to stew, and stir well.
Add the remaining ingredients.
Reduce heat, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 1 hour, or until meat is tender. Add more warm water if necessary, but sauce should be thick.
Discard thyme and bay leaves.
Serve hot over white rice or millet couscous.

Fish Balls (Boulettes)

Senegal has a long coastline, and fish are eaten regularly in many households. Like most other Senegalese dishes, the important part is the sauce, which will be served over a staple such as rice. The fish balls are a luxury.

Fish Balls

2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 heaped TBS parsley, minced
1 large tomato, chopped
2 slices white bread, crusts removed, diced
1 pound cod or haddock fillets (or any other white-fleshed fish)
1 onion
1 level tsp salt
¼ level tsp pepper
oil for deep frying

Mince garlic, parsley, tomato, bread, fish, and onion together in a food processor.
Add salt and pepper to taste, blending all ingredients well.

Form mixture into balls about 1½ inches in diameter.
Fry in deep oil heated to 375°F until well browned.

Sauce

½ onion, chopped
2 TBS tomato paste
½ pint water
1 level tsp salt
cayenne pepper to taste
1 TBS vinegar

Fry onion in 2 tablespoons of the oil left from frying fish balls.
Add tomato paste, 4 tablespoons water, and seasoning, mixing well.
Add remaining water and cook until thick.
Stir in vinegar and fish balls, and simmer for 30 minutes.
Serve with rice.

Barbecued Chicken with Lemon and Onions
(Poulet Yassa à la Casamance)

This is a classical dish from the Casamance region, whose cooking is famous throughout Senegal and surrounding regions.

1 chicken, cut in half along the spine
½ lemon
¼ cup lemon juice
2 TBS prepared mustard
¼ cup palm oil
¾ pound onions, sliced thinly
¼ cup parsley, minced
½ tsp peppercorns, crushed
½ tsp coarse salt
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
1 bay leaf
1 pint chicken stock
4 TBS fresh parsley, minced to garnish

Rub lemon thoroughly into each half chicken.
Place chicken halves side by side on a roasting pan.
Mix a marinade of lemon juice, mustard, oil, onions, parsley, peppercorns, salt, red pepper, and bay leaf.
Pour over chicken and marinate for 30 minutes.
Drain off marinade and reserve.
Broil chicken (or grill over charcoal) until brown on all sides and almost half done.
Put marinade to simmer in a pan for no longer than 5 minutes, stirring constantly to keep onions from browning.
Pour marinade over chicken, and stir in chicken stock.
Bake for 20 minutes in a preheated 375°F oven until onions are light golden.
Place a helping of rice or couscous on 4 plates.
Cut each chicken half in half, and place over the rice.
Top with pan juices and garnish with parsley.

Festive Dish for New Year (Le Thiéré Bassi)

The Tamxarit festival—marking the end of the Muslim year and the anniversary of the death of the prophet Mohammed—is celebrated by reversals of roles. Girls dress as boys and boys as girls. This is a day to treat oneself to heavy, strong-tasting foods like *thiéré bassi*, which, like the end of the year, mix savory and sweet.

Millet Couscous (see Algeria for the box "Couscous")

1 pound millet couscous (*araw* or *karaw*, available from African specialty stores, or wheat couscous)
1 to 2 cups warm water
2 TBS melted butter
1 ounce *lalo* (powder made from dried ground baobab leaves, available from African specialty stores, no substitute; omit if unavailable)
8 ounces dates, pitted and cut into quarters
3 ounces cooked haricot beans
3 ounces seedless raisins
2 ounces dried prunes, pitted and cut into quarters

Moisten the couscous by sprinkling with some warm water. (You may need more than 1 cup but not all of 2 cups. It depends on the quality of the grain.) Once all the grains are moist, break up the lumps with your fingers.
Steam the grains over boiling water for 10 minutes in a couscousier or in a cheesecloth-lined colander over boiling water.
Add butter and break up the grains again using a fork.
Add *lalo* and 2 tablespoons boiling water and mix it all together.
Steam for another 10 minutes. The grains should have become soft and slightly puffy.
Break up the grains again with a fork; add the dates, beans, raisins, and prunes and mix well. Cover the pan to keep warm.

Sauce

2 pounds stewing lamb (or turkey, chicken, or beef, cubed)
salt and pepper to taste
1 onion, sliced
1 cup spring onions, sliced
1 large leek, sliced
3 TBS parsley
1 tsp coriander seed
1 sprig thyme
2 cloves garlic
2 TBS peanut oil
¼ pound *merguez* sausage (or other spicy, dry sausage such as *chorizo*), sliced crosswise ¼-inch thick
2 bay leaves
¼ cup tomato paste
hot water as needed
½ cabbage, quartered
1 carrot, peeled and cubed
1 turnip, peeled and cubed
1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
1 small manioc (yucca) root (optional), peeled and cubed
1 small squash, seeded and cubed
3–4 large tomatoes, chopped roughly
1 medium red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
1 TBS sugar
2 cups stock (or 2 stock cubes dissolved in 2 cups hot water)

Season stewing meat with salt and pepper.
Chop fine the onion, spring onions, leek, parsley, coriander, thyme, and garlic in a food processor (or by hand). Do not let them turn into a puree.
Heat oil in a heavy stewing pot. Fry the *merguez* for 5–10 minutes, then remove, drain, and reserve. Brown the rest of the meat in the hot oil, turning regularly, then remove, drain, and reserve.
Add onion and herb mixture to the pot, reduce heat, add bay leaves, and allow to cook for 10 minutes.
Add tomato paste and 1 cup hot water.
Season with salt and pepper, then leave to simmer for 10 minutes.
Add stock and bring to a boil.
Add the meat and all the vegetables.
Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 30–45 minutes, or until the meat and vegetables are tender.
Remove from heat, add *merguez* and sugar, stir gently, then cover the pot and leave to stand for 10 minutes before serving.

To Serve

Place the couscous in a large dish.
Separate the meat and vegetables and pile on another dish.
Pour the sauce carefully over the couscous so it is well moistened but not liquid.
Serve couscous with meat and vegetables on the side.
Traditionally, when most of the couscous has been eaten, fresh milk is poured on it: *thiéré bassi* is the only dish in Senegal that combines meat and milk (representing savory and sweet) to indicate the confusion at the end of the year.
When the dish is empty, it is turned over to stop malicious spirits from seeing its bareness and to signify that the year has ended.

Sweet Porridge (Ngalakh)

This can be served as a dessert or a snack.

2 cups *bouyé* (baobab fruit) for fruit juice (or substitute tamarind pulp, available from Asian stores)
2 cups warm (not boiling) water
2 cups millet couscous (*karaw*, available from African products store; or substitute wheat couscous)
2 to 3 cups warm water
2 TBS butter, melted
4 cups warm (not boiling) water
⅔ cup natural peanut butter (smooth, unsweetened)
1 cup sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp orange-flower water
a pinch of grated nutmeg or cinnamon
¼ cup seedless raisins
sugar to serve

(*continued*)

Place the baobab fruit (or tamarind) in a glass bowl with warm water. Leave to soak for 2–4 hours.
Separate pulp from the seeds, by kneading with the fingers or breaking apart with a wooden spoon. Stir and mash vigorously until the water becomes an opaque tan liquid.
Strain liquid through a cheesecloth and refrigerate; discard pulp.
Place the couscous in a bowl, and sprinkle with some warm water just to moisten. (Water should not stand at the bottom of the bowl.) Once all the grains are moist, break up the lumps with your fingers.
Steam the grains over boiling water for 10 minutes in a couscousier or in a cheesecloth-lined covered colander over boiling water.
Break up the grains again using a fork.
Add butter and mix thoroughly, breaking up all lumps with a fork.
Steam for another 10 minutes. The grains should have swelled up and become soft. Break up the grains again with a fork.
Slowly add juice to peanut butter until liquid, then mixing both thoroughly.
Add sugar, vanilla, orange water, and nutmeg. Mix well.
Refrigerate until ready to serve.
Immediately before serving mix the couscous, cold fruit juice and peanut butter sauce, and raisins.
Serve in individual bowls and eat immediately.
Diners help themselves to more sugar at the table, if desired.

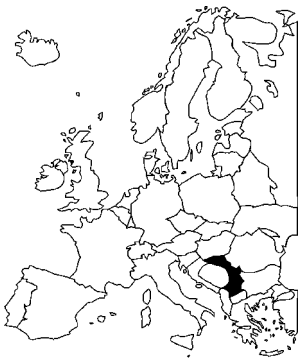
Fritters (Beignets)

These are sold as snacks by street vendors.

4 ounces plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
1 egg, well beaten
¼ pint milk
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 drops orange extract or grated rind from 1 orange
oil for deep-frying

Sift dry ingredients together.
Mix all liquid ingredients except oil. Slowly stir into dry ingredients until smooth.
Heat oil to 375°F.
Drop mixture by spoonfuls, a few at a time, into oil, and fry to a deep golden brown.
Drain and serve as snack.

SERBIA



Located in the western Balkans, Servia was an Ottoman province until it came under the sway of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and then became an independent kingdom. Later it became the major component of Yugoslavia, which lasted until the end of the twentieth century, when the federation broke up in civil war.

The country is hilly in the west, with a wide river plain to the east. The climate is temperate to cool, enabling wheat, apricots and similar fruits to be raised. Pigs and sheep are raised as well.

The majority of the population are ethnic Serbs, though there are large minorities of Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Albanians.

Serbian food emphasizes meat (particularly pork, of which the Serbs are very proud), potatoes, and dairy products. The cuisine is similar to that of other Balkan countries and is also influenced by neighboring Bulgaria and Hungary. Many of these foods have a Turkish origin. Cuisine varies regionally, showing the influence of ethnic groups and local crops. In the north, Hungarian dishes like *goulash* are popular, while the Turks left Serbians with a taste for kebabs.

Foodstuffs

- Wheat breads, pasta, potatoes are the major staples. Bread is always on the table.
- Meat: pork, in particular, and lamb and veal are preferred.
- Inland fish such as carp are eaten, and there is an import trade in marine fish from the Adriatic. Fish is used in chowders and is grilled and fried.
- Vegetables: cabbage, beans, carrots, radishes, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, potatoes.
- Fruit: plums and apricots, grapes, melons, apples.

Typical Dishes

- Serbian food includes soups, salads, roasted and stewed meats, seasoned fresh and pickled vegetables, bean dishes, cheese dishes, sausages and prosciutto, sweets and preserves, layer cakes, fresh breads. Bread and salads are served with appetizers and main courses. Breads include *pogaca* and *proja* (corn bread) and many varieties of wheat bread. Salads are made from a variety of fresh and pickled vegetables such as beans, cucumbers, onions, peppers, tomatoes, and sauerkraut. Fruit and nuts are used in desserts, strudels, pancakes, and pastries.

- Main dishes: grilled pork cutlets baked with spiced stewed peppers, zucchini, tomatoes, and rice (*duvec*); pastry made from thin layers, eggs, and feta cheese (*gibanica*). Grilled meats are extremely popular, such as *mesano meso*, a mixed grill of pork cutlet, liver sausage, and minced meat patties with onions; minced meat patties sprinkled with spices and grilled (*pljeskavica*). *Musaka* (layers of potatoes or eggplant, minced meat and cheese, a variation on a Greek dish); *pasulj*, beans cooked with vegetables and sometimes ribs; roast meat in sauerkraut (*podvarak*). Many dishes are made of vegetables stuffed with meat and rice, such as stuffed peppers (*punjene paprika)*; cabbage or vine leaves (*sarma*).
- Lighter dishes, which may be a part of the main meal or the main dish in a lesser meal, include *ajvar*, a relish made of roast red peppers, eggplant, and garlic; *cavepi* (Serbian sausage), which are eaten as appetizers; *kajmak*, a cream and butter spread; baked beans (*prebranac*).
- *Cevapcici* (small rolls of mixed minced meat), eaten with plain onions and warm flat bread wraps are usually served at barbecues or at parties.
- Desserts may include fresh local fruit or sweet pastries, or *slatko* (literally, "sweet"): sweet preserves, one or two spoonfuls of which are served accompanied by a glass of water, and which are also served as snacks at home.
- Snacks: *burek*, a pastry layered with cheese or meat; *baklava*, sweet layered flaky pastry with nuts.
- Drinks: coffee (almost always *turska kafa*: black coffee); local juices, including a traditional drink made from corn (*boza*), *kvas*, a yogurt drink (*kfir*), and wine (which many Serbians like drinking with meals); beer and brandies, including plum brandy (*sljivovica*) and grape brandy (*lozova rakija*), which are popular, often homemade, and in which every household head takes great pride.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and many snacks.
- Breakfast is an early, heavy meal: pastries such as *burek* (layered flaky pastry and cheese or meat) or *krompirusa* (layered pastry of potatoes), or bread are served with butter, jam, yogurt, sour cream, and cheese. Bacon, sausages, eggs, and *kajmak* (clotted cream). Tea, milk, or strong Turkish coffee in small cups are also consumed.
- Lunch is the main meal of the day, eaten, if possible, with the whole family, between 2 and 4 p.m., with varied appetizers, soup, main dish, and dessert.
- Evening meal: a lighter, late meal, often consisting of dishes similar to those consumed at breakfast.
- Snacks include savory and sweet pastries, eaten with a small cup of black coffee; and fruit conserves eaten with a spoon and a glass of cold water.

Eggplant Relish (Ajvar)

Ajvar is a salad/relish popular all over former Yugoslavia's constituent states and has many variations. It is always based on eggplants and sweet peppers.

2 eggplants
3 sweet bell peppers
1 onion, chopped fine
½ cup oil
1 onion, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste

Roast eggplant and peppers in oven (370°F) until peel is charred and fruit have collapsed, about 40–45 minutes. Let cool.
Slit the eggplant and remove flesh with a spoon (don't worry if some peel gets included).
Peel skins off peppers, pull out core and discard all seeds.
Chop eggplants and peppers together.
Heat half the oil. Sauté onion until light golden.
Add garlic. Cook for 1 minute.
Transfer onion and garlic into a bowl; add eggplant and peppers.
Slowly add the remaining oil, while stirring.
Mix in lemon juice and season with salt and pepper.
Serve with grilled meat and bean dishes.

Baked Beans (Prebranac)

This is a classic and very ancient dish in Serbia, eaten at lunch or supper.

1 pound white beans, soaked overnight in cold water and drained
water as needed
1 cup vegetable oil
2 pounds onions, sliced fine
salt and pepper to taste
¼ tsp hot red paprika
1 bay leaf
1 small dried hot pepper

Simmer beans in water to cover until tender (do not overcook, as they must remain whole), about 25–30 minutes. Drain, reserving ½ cup of liquid.
Heat 2 TBS oil. Sauté onions until light golden.
Add seasoning, paprika, bay leaf, and hot pepper, and mix well.
In an oiled casserole, layer the beans and onions, starting and ending with beans.
Take care that they do not mix.
Pour the remaining oil and reserved ½ cup of liquid over the beans.
Bake in a preheated 370°F oven for 45 minutes, or until all the water has evaporated.
Serve with a meat dish, *paprikas*, and salads.

Thick Chicken Soup with Kaymak

Kaymak (clotted cream) is used as a thickener, a flavoring, and on its own for both sweet and savory dishes. Its origins are probably in central Asia, from whence it was brought to the Balkans by the Turks.

2 ounces lard
1 chicken, jointed into pieces
2 onions, finely chopped
2 cups *kaymak* (or substitute double or clotted cream)
½ tsp red paprika

(*continued*)

2 TBS flour
2 pints lukewarm water
salt and pepper to taste
½ bunch parsley, minced fine

Heat lard. Fry chicken pieces until brown on all sides. Remove and set aside.
Add onions to hot lard. Cook slowly until soft.
Mix *kaymak* with paprika and add to onions. Add flour and stir until well blended.
Add lukewarm water, chicken, and season to taste.
Simmer until chicken is tender, about 40–45 minutes.
Sprinkle with parsley before serving.
Serve with rice.

Meat Patties (Fashir)

Grilled and baked meats are common as both snacks and main dishes.

1 pound ground pork (or mix of beef and pork, turkey or chicken)
½ cup dry bread crumbs
1 TBS dried parsley
1 TBS paprika
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS caraway seed
2 eggs, beaten (1 for coating)
¼ cup dried bread crumbs (for coating)
oil for frying

Preheat oven to 340°F.
Mix meat with bread crumbs, parsley, paprika, seasoning, caraway seed, and 1 egg.
Blend well and shape into hamburger-sized patties.
Dip each meat patty into remaining egg, then into bread crumbs, coating both sides.
Heat oil in a frying pan. Quickly fry each patty on both sides, then transfer to a large greased baking dish.
Bake patties, covered, for approximately 30–45 minutes.
Serve with rice, bread, and pickles.

Meat and Vegetable Casserole (Musaka)

Though considered typically Serbian, this is evidence of the Greek influence on Serbian cooking.

2 TBS oil
1 large onion, sliced fine
1 pound ground meat
salt and pepper to taste
2 pounds potatoes, peeled and sliced ⅛-inch thick
2 tsp salt
4 eggs, beaten
1½ cups milk

Heat oil in a pan. Add onion and sauté until golden brown.
Add meat and seasoning, and stir-fry until meat is browned. Remove from heat.
Sprinkle salt over potato slices and mix well.
Oil a 2-quart casserole, and alternately layer the potatoes and meat, beginning and ending with potatoes.
Mix the eggs and milk. Pour mixture over potatoes and meat.
Bake in a preheated 370°F oven for about 40 minutes, or until the potatoes test done: potatoes should be easily pierced by a skewer and browned on top.
Serve with *paprikas*.

Cooked Peppers (Paprikas)

This Hungarian-influenced dish is served as a relish for the main meal, or as a dish for a lighter meal in the evening.

1 pound fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
2 cups tomato puree
1 pepperoni or chorizo sausage, sliced
4 frankfurter sausages, sliced
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips
½ onion, sliced
2 cups water
½ tsp paprika
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1½ tsp chili powder
salt to taste

In a heavy saucepan, simmer all the ingredients, covered, for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
Taste and adjust seasoning, and serve as a relish with a meat dish.

Sponge Cake (Ledene Kocke)

Cakes are served for dessert and as snacks in the afternoon with coffee.

4 eggs, separated
2 TBS cocoa
½ tsp baking powder
13 TBS sugar
1 pint milk
4 TBS flour
½ tsp vanilla extract
8 ounces sugar
1 cup water for syrup
a few drops rosewater or orange blossom water

Prepare the sponge cake: mix well the egg yolks, cocoa, and baking powder.
Beat egg whites to soft peaks. Gradually beat in 4 TBS sugar, until egg whites stand in stiff peaks.

(*continued*)

Fold gently but thoroughly into egg yolk mixture.
Grease a round 10-inch baking pan, spoon in the batter, and bake until golden in a 350°F oven, approximately 30 minutes.
Let cool, then chill for about 1 hour, covered, in the refrigerator while the topping is prepared.
Heat the milk until bubbles form on the sides of the pan.
Combine 4 tablespoons flour and 9 tablespoons sugar.
Add a few spoonfuls of hot milk to the flour and sugar mix. Make a slurry, adding milk as necessary and whisking to keep lumps from forming.
Return the slurry to the rest of the milk. Stir in vanilla.
Cook on very low heat, whisking all the time, until very thick.
Allow to cool.
Make a syrup: heat sugar and water until sugar dissolves.
Bring to a boil, and simmer until slightly thickened. Flavor with rosewater or orange blossom water.
Pour hot syrup over cold sponge cake. Return to the refrigerator for 10 minutes.
Cover with cooled custard cream.
Serve with Turkish coffee.

SEYCHELLES

Seychelles, a former French and British colony, comprises a group of islands northeast of Madagascar, in the Indian Ocean. The climate is tropical and humid. Mahé and some other major islands are volcanic and rocky. The rest of the islands are low-lying coral atolls.

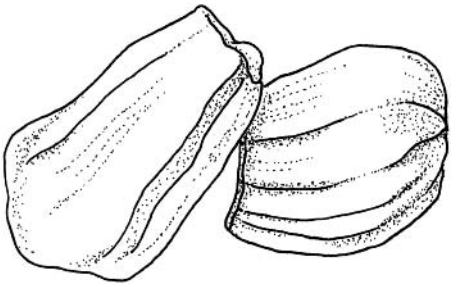
Farmers raise coconuts, cinnamon, vanilla, sweet potatoes, cassava, bananas, and poultry. There is a lively fishery industry including tuna for export.

The first settlers arrived in the Seychelles during the eighteenth century. The population today is a mix of African, Indian, European, and Chinese immigrants, whose influences make for a blended cuisine. Vanilla, ginger, and garlic were adopted from Madagascar and Reunion. Indian merchants and settlers added *massalés* (spice blends) and *pulaos* (flavored rice), which are now part of the local culinary tradition.

Cooking and eating traditions thus vary between the different groups. The Creoles tend to eat with modified European place settings. Their cuisine relies heavily on fish and seafood, rice, vegetables, and fruit. Those of Indian and Chinese origin often continue their traditions. Seafood, for instance, can be served grilled with a butter sauce (French) or in a coconut milk *cari* sauce (Indian), or stir-fried in the Chinese manner.

Foodstuffs

- Long-grain rice is the staple in most meals.
- Pork and chicken are the common meats; other meats must be imported.
- Fish and seafood, a major source of food, include snapper, tuna, kingfish, reef fish such as parrotfish, prawns, octopus, and squid.
- Vegetables: peppers, eggplant, calabashes, *chayote*.
- Fruits: coconut (coconut milk is used in many dishes), papaya, bananas, mangoes, avocados, jackfruit, grapefruit, guavas, lychees, pineapples, melons, limes. Breadfruit is a major food source prepared in similar ways to the potato (mashed, fried as chips, or roasted).



JACKFRUIT SEGMENTS

Typical Dishes

- Coconut curries, *chauve-souris* (flying fox, fruitbat), *salade de palmiste* (heart of palm salad), *la daube* (mash, made from bananas, breadfruit, yams, cassavas).
- Seafood: octopus curried in fresh coconut milk; prawns curried in a sweet sauce or grilled in garlic butter; smoked sailfish (a common appetizer).
- Chutneys (*chatini*) made from marinated tropical fruit, cucumber, cabbage, and pumpkins, and vinegar accompany most *cari*.
- Common drinks include tea, coffee, and lemon-grass tea, which is drunk either hot or cold.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks, usually fruit.
- Table settings vary from European standard, to Indian thali (brass tray), to eating with the fingers, depending on preference.
- Breakfast is continental, with bread, cassava cakes, or rice; and coffee or tea.
- Lunch: light meal of bread or staple and salad.
- The main meal of the day is eaten in the evening: salad or soup, main dish of fish or meat and a carbohydrate, and dessert.

Fish Stew (Bouillon de Poisson)

Fish is a major component of the diet, and fish soup can appear at midday or in the evening, as either a starter or a main dish.

4 medium fish fillets
juice of 1 lemon
salt and pepper to taste
butter
1 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 TBS tomato paste
½ tsp white pepper
½ tsp mixed nutmeg and cinnamon
1 pound potatoes, peeled and cubed

Place the fish in an ovenproof casserole. Sprinkle with lemon juice. Season and dot with butter.
Heat oil in a pan. Sauté onion until dark golden.
Mix tomato paste and spices with onion. Cook for 2–3 minutes. Divide into four and spoon over each fish.
Pile potatoes on top of fish. Cover with water.
Place casserole, covered, in a 360°F oven for 25–30 minutes or until fish flakes easily.
Serve with rice or cooked yams.

Seychelles Fish Curry
(Cari de Poisson)

Indian immigrants brought to work the plantations brought with them a tradition of curries, which they adapted to local conditions

1 2-pound fish (snapper, jack, or parrotfish, or the like), cut into bite-sized pieces
salt and black pepper to taste
2 TBS vegetable oil
2 onions, chopped
2 TBS *massalé* (mixed spice powder; see recipe below)
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 TBS ginger, grated
3 TBS tamarind juice
1 TBS thyme
½ tsp anise
1 pint fish stock (or 2 cubes fish stock dissolved in 2 cups warm water)

Season fish with salt and pepper and set aside.
Heat oil in a heavy pan and fry onions until golden.
Stir in the *massalé* and turmeric and fry lightly.
Add the fish and all other ingredients.
Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10–15 minutes until the fish flakes easily. Do not overcook.
Serve with rice.

Pork Curry (Cari de Porc)

Pork was introduced by European settlers, and was adapted by being cooked in a curry. Served with a starch such as rice, this would feature in the main meal of the day.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 TBS *massalé* (mixed spice powder; see recipe below)
1 TBS turmeric powder
1 pound pork meat, cut in small cubes
salt and black pepper to taste
1 cup boiling water
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
5 curry leaves (available in Indian stores)
1 large potato, peeled and cut into small cubes

Heat oil and brown the onion.
Add *massalé* and turmeric powder.
Fry, stirring constantly, over medium heat. Be careful not to burn.
Season meat with salt and pepper, and add to onion and spice mixture.
Brown meat on all sides.
Add the boiling water.

(*continued*)

Add garlic, ginger, curry leaves, and potato. Mix well.
Cover and simmer on lowest heat for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened, and meat and potatoes are cooked.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Serve with white rice.

Flavored Rice (Pulao)

Pulaos (originating from Iranian *pilaf*) were introduced into the Seychelles' local cuisine by Indian merchants and settlers. They are a very common quick food, often using rice left over from the previous day. This pulao reveals a Chinese influence in its preparation.

4 TBS vegetable oil
2 eggs, beaten
2 onions, sliced thin
1 pound cooked meat, diced
2 sausages (*chorizo* or Chinese sausage, or other dry, spicy sausage), sliced thin
1 tsp *massalé* (mixed spice powder)
2 cups boiled rice

Heat half the oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
Add the eggs and cook until set on both sides. Remove.
Fold over several times, slice crosswise to shred, and then chop fine. Reserve.
In the same pan, heat the remaining oil. Add onions and fry until golden.
Add meat and sausage, and stir-fry over high heat until slightly crisp.
Add *massalé*. Stir-fry for additional 2 minutes or so, keeping spices from burning.
Lower heat. Mix the rice and chopped eggs into the fried meat.
Allow rice to heat through.
Serve immediately, with a relish or pickles.

Grilled Fish

Tropical fish—snapper, jacks, reef fish such as parrotfish, and grouper—are a major source of protein for the islanders.

1 whole large fish (preferably snapper or parrotfish), cleaned, and sides gashed 3–4 times
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS tomato ketchup
1 TBS soy sauce
2 tsp vegetable oil
1 TBS *massalé* (mixed spice powder)
2 onions, sliced thin
2 ripe tomatoes, sliced thin crosswise

Rub salt and pepper into the cuts in the fish.
Mix ketchup, soy sauce, 1 teaspoon oil, and *massalé* to a paste.
With a spoon, rub the paste into the cuts in the fish.

Place the fish on a grid on a baking tray.
Cover with onions and tomatoes, and drizzle over any remaining oil.
Broil the fish under a moderate grill, and cook for 10 minutes or until done on one side. Turn over, baste the fish with the pan juices, and cook for another 10 minutes, or until it flakes easily.
Serve hot with rice.

Tuna in Turmeric and Coconut Milk (Thon au Safran)

In the Seychelles, the word "safran" is used for turmeric, not for true saffron. Several varieties of tuna are caught in the waters off the islands.

3 TBS vegetable oil
1 pound fresh tuna (or other meaty fish such as bonito), cut into large cubes
2 cups coconut milk
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 large onion, sliced
3 garlic cloves
1½ TBS fresh grated ginger
1 to 3 chilies, cored, seeded, and shredded
1½ tsp salt
½ tsp cardamom powder
5 curry leaves
½ cup grated coconut

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Quickly but gently brown fish on all sides. Remove fish and reserve. Drain off the oil from the pan and wipe clean with paper towels.
Add coconut milk, turmeric, onion, garlic, ginger, and chili, and simmer for 10 minutes.
Add tuna and season with salt, cardamom, and curry leaves.
Cover and cook gently for 10 minutes.
Stir in grated coconut.
Uncover and cook for a few minutes more until the sauce becomes thick and creamy.
Serve with long-grain rice, chutneys, and vegetable *achaars*.

Spice Mix (Massalé)

This spice mix is a Seychelles variant on Indian *massala*, which was brought to the islands by Gujarati traders who settled in the Seychelles. It is now an almost essential flavor component of many dishes.

2 TBS coriander seeds
2 tsp cumin seeds
2 tsp black peppercorns
1 tsp cardamom pods
1 tsp cloves
small cinnamon stick
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp grated nutmeg

(*continued*)

Dry-roast the whole spices in a hot wok until lightly colored. Make sure to stir constantly and not let the spices burn, which they do very easily.
Set aside to cool.
Add chili and nutmeg.
Grind all ingredients finely in a mortar (or food processor).
Store in an airtight jar in a cool place (the refrigerator is fine). The mixture will keep well for 2 months or more.

Plantains in Coconut Milk (Daube de Banane Plantain)

This is commonly served as a snack or dessert with coffee or tea.

4 cinnamon sticks
4 ripe plantains (or substitute ripe bananas), peeled, cut lengthwise and then in half
4 TBS brown sugar
1 tsp salt
1 vanilla pod, cut lengthwise, seeds scraped out and reserved (or 2 tsp vanilla extract)
1 tsp nutmeg powder
1 pint coconut milk

Place cinnamon at the bottom of a heavy saucepan (the heavier the pan, the better, as the less likely to burn).
Layer plantains, cut side up, on the cinnamon.
Sprinkle with sugar, salt, vanilla, and nutmeg.
Pour coconut milk to cover the plantains.
Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, and simmer, uncovered, for 25 to 30 minutes. Plantains should be soft, with plenty of thick creamy coconut sauce.

Sweet Potato Dessert (La Daube Patate)

This is a popular sweet or snack.

1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled, washed, cut in small cubes
1 cup coconut milk
1 cup sugar
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
a pinch of nutmeg

Place the sweet potatoes in a pan with coconut milk, sugar, salt, vanilla, and nutmeg.
Simmer on medium heat until sauce thickens, stirring occasionally.
Remove from heat. Cool to room temperature and serve for dessert.

SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone is a West African country on the Atlantic, between Guinea and Liberia. The preceding decade has been marked by a savage civil war that is only now dying down. The terrain varies from mangrove swamps to plateaus and hills. The climate is tropical, enabling subsistence farming of rice, the main staple; other staple crops; vegetables; fruits; and, in particular, cacao and coffee, important cash crops for export. Poultry and cattle are raised. Fish are harvested from the sea and inland rivers.

Established by freed slaves from British colonies in the Americas, Sierra Leone's population is a mix of various tribes and various dialects. About 10 percent are the descendants of the freed slaves (Creoles); the rest are a mix of African tribes.

Cooking is based on a staple porridge, eaten with peanut- or vegetable-based sauces, with or without meat.

Foodstuffs

- Cassava, maize, millet, sorghum are the major staples. The Mende people in southeast Sierra Leone eat rice as the main staple food.
- Meat: chicken, goat, beef, and canned meat.
- Fish are an important food in coastal areas.
- Vegetables: pulses and beans, sweet potatoes, peanuts, onions, greens, tomatoes.
- Fruit: citrus fruit, plantains, mangoes, pineapples.
- Palm oil is used for flavoring, as are chili peppers.

Typical Dishes

- Palm nut (*banga*) soup; steamed packets with fish (*abala*) or black-eyed peas (*oleleh*); sardine omelets; bean fritters (*binch akara*); groundnut stew; corned beef.
- Snacks and sweets: rice-flour balls (*foorah*); roasted peanuts; candied peanuts (*kanya*); fried plantains. Chips (*fry-fry*) from street traders.

Eating Styles

- Two meals a day (morning and evening) for most of the population, three times a day in the cities; and snacks.
- Most families eat together around a shared pot of staple and side dishes, eaten with the hands. In the towns, modified European settings.
- Most meals include a dish of the staple, and one or more side dishes, usually a sauce with or without meat, and perhaps fritters or something similar. The evening meal may be elaborate with a meat dish.
- Snacks can be bought from street vendors.
- Drinks include tea and coffee, fruit juices, international soft drinks.

Fish Packets (Abala)

This is a Mende recipe using the common African style of cooking food in leaf packets.

1 large onion, minced fine
1 small bell pepper, cored and seeded
1½ cups rice flour
¼ cup palm oil
salt to taste
½ cup smoked fish, deskinned, deboned, and flaked
4 banana leaves (or substitute 10-inch square aluminum foil sheets), well greased with palm oil

Put onion, pepper, rice flour, palm oil, salt and enough water in a blender or food processor and process to a thick paste.
Transfer to a bowl, add fish, and mix well.
Divide mixture into four, and place one portion onto a well-greased banana leaf or aluminum foil. Seal the banana leaves with kitchen string; fold the foil firmly to secure.
Steam over boiling water for about 1 hour until the rice is cooked.
Serve as a main dish with bean fritters.

Bean Fritters (Binch Akara)

This can be served as a side dish with any meal.

1 pound black-eyed peas or cowpeas, soaked for 2 hours or overnight in cold water and drained
water as needed
2 tsp salt
1 small onion, chopped very fine
1 tsp chili flakes
oil for deep-frying

Place beans in a blender or food processor with a cup of water, salt, onion, and chili. Process to a very thick paste.
Heat about 3 inches of oil in a deep frying pan until moderately hot.

Drop spoonfuls of the bean mixture, a few at a time, into oil.
Fry until golden brown on both sides.
Drain on absorbent paper.
Serve hot as a snack.

Groundnut Stew

Peanuts, called groundnuts, are a major crop in Sierra Leone and are used for flavoring and thickening stews. Actually groundnuts are a small, round African bean, often called Bambara nuts or Bambara beans, that also fruit underground, just like the peanut. They are not as prolific as peanuts, and so have largely been supplanted. The Bambara nut is still grown, but not as widely as the peanut, and efforts are being made to increase crops.

1 pound stewing meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
½ tsp bouillon powder (or 1 cube bouillon, crushed)
½ cup oil
½ cup water
1 large bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped fine
1 large onion, chopped
2 large tomatoes, diced
¼ cup natural peanut butter
½ cup warm water
½ tsp cayenne pepper
salt to taste

Season meat with bouillon powder. Mix well. Allow to stand for 3 hours.
In a heavy saucepan, heat half the oil and brown meat on all sides.
Add water and simmer until tender. Remove meat and broth and reserve.
In the same pan, heat remaining oil. Sauté pepper and onion together until soft. Add tomatoes and stir-fry briskly.
Mix peanut butter with some of the meat broth to a thin paste and add to the pan.
Stir in the meat and season to taste. Simmer for 15 minutes over lowest heat possible.
Serve with rice, boiled yam, cassava, and green vegetables.

Corned Beef Cakes

Corned beef is selected for its own qualities, not as a poor substitute for fresh beef as it is in the United States. This is common in the cities for any meal, with rice or cassava staple.

1 pound potatoes or yams or sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
salted water for boiling
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp cayenne pepper
1 TBS parsley, chopped fine

(*continued*)

1 small onion, chopped
1 14- to 16-ounce can corned beef
2 eggs, beaten
¼ cup milk
2 cups bread crumbs for coating
oil for deep-frying

Boil potatoes in salted water until soft. Drain and mash.
Add salt and pepper, cayenne, parsley, onion, and corned beef to potatoes. Mix well.
Combine half the beaten egg with milk. Add just enough to the corned beef mixture to moisten it. Mix well.
With moistened hands, shape into patties.
Dip into remaining beaten egg and roll in bread crumbs.
Fry in hot oil until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels and serve hot.

Prawn Palava

Prawns and crabs are collected from the estuaries and swampy areas that characterize much of Sierra Leone's coastline.

2 TBS oil
1 medium onion, chopped fine
1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
¼ cup flaked smoked fish
1 pint water
2 TBS natural (unsweetened) peanut butter
salt and chili pepper to taste
1 pound spinach, fresh or frozen, chopped fine
1 pound fresh or frozen peeled raw prawns or large shrimp

Heat oil at medium heat in a heavy saucepan.
Add onion and cook until translucent. Add tomatoes, increase heat, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring briskly. Add the smoked fish.
Reduce heat to moderate and add half the water; allow to simmer for 5 minutes.
Dilute peanut butter with some of the warm broth, then add peanut mixture to the pan.
Stir well and allow to cook, bubbling gently, for 8–10 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add remaining water, salt and chili.
Stir spinach into sauce and allow to cook on moderate heat until sauce is thick, around 10 minutes.
Add the drained prawns.
Stir and cook for 10 minutes more.
Serve with boiled yams or rice.

Banana Fritters

This is a common snack sold by street vendors.

6 well-ripened bananas, peeled and well mashed
1 cup rice flour
½ cup sugar dissolved in 4 TBS water
l tsp nutmeg
oil for frying

To the mashed bananas, add rice flour, sugar, and nutmeg to make a thick batter.
Add water, if needed, if the mixture is too thick to drop off a spoon.
Mix well.
Heat a heavy frying pan or griddle and oil lightly.
Drop 2–3 spoonfuls of the batter and cook like pancakes until golden brown on both sides.
Serve hot for breakfast or as snack.

Peanut Squares (Kanya)

This is a common street snack sold by vendors.

1 cup peanuts, shells and skins removed, roasted
1 cup rice flour
½ cup sugar

Using a mortar and pestle, a rolling pin, or something similar, put the peanuts into a plastic or paper bag, and pound them into small pieces, taking care not to crush them into a paste. (Alternatively use a food processor or blender.)
Parch (dry fry) the rice flour in a dry wok over low heat, stirring continuously, until it becomes lightly golden. Be careful not to burn.
Combine the crushed peanuts and rice flour. Crush and grind them together, or pulse them in a food processor or blender, to a powder. Add sugar and mix well.
Press the mixture firmly into an 8×10-inch rectangular pan.
Allow to cool slightly, then cut with a sharp knife into diamond shapes.
Serve immediately, or store in airtight containers.

SINGAPORE

Singapore is a small, wealthy city-state at the southern tip of the Malay peninsula. Already a Malay trading center in the fourteenth century, Singapore came under British colonial rule in 1826. It was then briefly a part of Malaysia and finally became fully independent in 1965.

Singaporeans include Chinese, Indians, and Malays, with no group forming an absolute majority. With a tropical climate and only 5 percent available land, Singapore practises intensive agro technology to produce tropical fruits, vegetables, and poultry, as well as fish from offshore fish farms, but still imports 80–90 percent of its food. Singaporean cuisine is similar to Malaysian and has been influenced by Indonesian, Indian, and southern Chinese cooking, but retains its own definite character. As in Malaysia, *nyonya* cooking—a distinctive Malay-Chinese style—is practiced, and fierce chili sauce (*sambal belachan*) is spooned at the table into most dishes. Singaporeans love to eat well; the country has a reputation as a food paradise.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, noodles.
- Indian-style flat breads (*roti canai*) and steamed breads (*appam*).
- Fish, seafood, chicken, pork (not for Muslims), beef (not for Hindus), eggs.
- Long beans, eggplant, squash, okra, leafy greens, various gourds, bitter melon, various types of Chinese cabbage, Chinese flowering broccoli.
- Soybean products (tofu, soy sauce, fermented black beans).
- Seasoning: wide range of spices and herbs, hot chilies; sambal *belachan* (chili and shrimp paste, an indispensable table condiment). coconut milk.
- Drinks: tea, coconut juice, sugarcane juice, rosewater; syrup drinks

Typical Dishes

- Soups: pork and herbs (*bak kut teh*), stuffed tofu (*yong tao foo*).
- Noodle dishes: many styles (*laksa*, Hokkien, Teochew, Thai, etc.), fried or with soup, served with side dish of hot chili sauce.
- Curried beef or chicken, fish-head curry.
- Grilled skewered meats (*satay*), served with spicy peanut sauce.

- Seafood dishes: chili crab, steamed fish.
- Snacks: savory radish cake, sweet coconut–based rice pastries, Indian-style rice and lentil pancakes, noodles.

BOK CHOY

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals plus snacks daily.
- Many meals are eaten out because of low price, good quality, plentiful variety, and vast numbers of eating places, from hawker stalls (mobile food stalls) and small family-run shops to elegant restaurants. Hawker stalls are open from sundown until early morning.
- Breakfast, typically eaten from hawker stalls or street shops—Indian-style rice pancakes (*appam*) served with fresh grated coconut; Chinese-style rice porridge (*chok*) eaten with sausage, bits of chicken or pork and fried Chinese bread (*you tiow*); Indian-style flat bread (*roti*) with curried lentil sauce. Tea, coffee. Also Western-style toast with butter and jam; American-style boxed cereals and milk for children.
- Lunch, typically eaten out—noodles with or without soup, rice with skewer-grilled meat (*satay*), chicken rice.
- Dinner, mostly eaten out at several hawker stalls, or substantial meal of rice, soup, and several side dishes (usually one more than the number of diners).
- Snacks are eaten at mid-morning, mid-afternoon, and also very late after dinner. Savory or sweet rice pastries, noodles, Chinese-style steamed buns with assorted savory fillings, Indian-style flat breads with fillings or sauce (*roti*).

Chicken Rice (Hainan Ji Fan)

This Hainanese dish is possibly the most popular lunch or snack dish in Singapore. There are shops that specialize just in this one dish, each with its own variation, and die-hard fans are prepared to wait in line if the shop is full.

4 large portions chicken (legs including thighs, or quarters), about 2–3 pounds
3 stalks spring onion, sliced into 2-inch lengths
2-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced thin
salt
10 cups water
2 TBS oil
2 TBS grated fresh ginger
3 cloves garlic, minced
2-inch piece cinnamon stick
3 whole cloves
1 star anise
2 cups rice
2 pandanus leaves (or 2 drops pandanus flavoring) (optional)
½ tsp salt

Garnish per Person

3–4 cucumber slices
2 TBS cilantro
1 tomato, quartered
1 lettuce leaf, shredded
1 slice pineapple (optional)

(*continued*)

First prepare the chicken: in a covered saucepan, place chicken, spring onion, ginger, salt, and water.
Bring to a boil over medium heat; reduce heat to allow chicken to simmer for 20–30 minutes or until tender.
Allow to cool in the pan; remove the chicken, debone and cut the flesh into bite-size pieces. Set aside.
Reserve the broth for cooking the rice and soup.
Prepare the rice. In a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid, heat oil at medium heat.
Stir-fry grated ginger and garlic for 1 minute.
Add cinnamon, cloves, star anise, and rice; stir-fry for 1–2 minutes.
Pour in 4 cups reserved broth left from cooking the chicken.
Add the pandanus leaves tied into a knot and salt. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to very low, cover, and let simmer on lowest heat for 15–20 minutes or until rice is done.
To assemble the dish: distribute rice into 4 bowls.
Top with chicken slices and surround with garnishes.
Heat the remaining broth to boiling: there should be about 6 cups. Add more water and seasoning, if needed.
Ladle soup over chicken and rice; serve at once.
Alternatively, serve broth in a separate bowl, garnished with cilantro, to accompany the rice and garnishes in another bowl. Eat the chicken and garnishes with chopsticks and use a spoon for the rice and soup.

Steamed Fish Cake (Otak-Otak)

This traditional Malay delicacy, wrapped in long, thin parcels of banana leaf, is made of minced fish, spices, lemon grass, and thick coconut milk slowly barbecued over glowing coals.

Otak-otak is eaten throughout Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia as a snack between meals or as an accompaniment to *nasi lemak* (coconut rice), together with other seafood dishes. And, of course, with the hot chili sauce (sambal *belachan*). Individual foil-wrapped parcels of *otak-otak* can be cooked over glowing coals in a barbecue. Serve hot or cold as a snack, or as part of a meal with rice and other side dishes.

1 pound white fish fillets (make sure there are no bones left)
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 cup coconut milk
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
5 kaffir lime leaves, central vein removed and shredded (or rind from 1 lime, grated)
5–6 savoy cabbage leaves
foil for wrapping pan

Spice Mix

4 candlenuts (or 10 whole cashew nuts)
20 dried chilies (reduce as desired)
2 TBS fresh grated ginger
½ tsp powdered turmeric
1 stalk lemon grass, sliced into ½-inch lengths

2 square inches by ¼-inch-thick piece of shrimp paste (*belachan*)
10 shallots or 1 small onion
1 TBS coriander powder

Process fish fillets in a food processor until finely minced. Transfer to a container; set aside.
Soak candlenuts (if using) in warm water till softened, for about 30 minutes. Remove and drain.
In the same food processor container used for fish, place the candlenuts and other ingredients for the spice mix and process to a paste.
Heat a wok over medium heat, add oil, and stir in spice paste. Fry for 5 minutes until the mixture is fragrant.
Stir in the coconut milk, and keep stirring well until just before it boils. Remove from heat and cool.
To the spiced coconut milk, add the egg, ground fish, salt, sugar, and lime leaves. Mix thoroughly and chill in the refrigerator until needed.
Place cabbage leaves in a large bowl. Pour boiling water to cover and let soften for 5 minutes. Remove cabbage leaves and cool.
Grease an 8-inch loaf pan; lay 2 or 3 cabbage leaves to cover the bottom and overlap the sides of the pan.
Pack the fish mixture into the pan, over the cabbage.
Use remaining leaves to fold over the fish. Wrap the loaf pan in a large sheet of foil.
Set the wrapped pan within a roasting pan filled with hot water, midway up the loaf pan.
Bake at 350°F for 25–30 minutes or until it tests done with a bamboo skewer.
Leave to settle for 10 minutes before serving.
Cut into 1-inch-thick slices and serve.

Coconut Rice (Nasi Lemak)

This dish is commonly eaten throughout Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia and is popular for snacks, breakfast, and for other meals. It is usually accompanied by scrambled or hard-boiled egg, cucumber slices, fried dried anchovies, or other seafood dishes. Hot chili sauce is always added at the table. *Nyonya*-style *nasi lemak* comes with fried chicken wings as well. While cooking the rice, do not, at any time, open the lid.

1 cup long-grain rice (preferably Basmati), rinsed and well drained
2½ cups coconut milk
4 pandanus leaves or 2 drops pandanus essence (omit if unavailable)
1 stalk lemon grass, bruised
2 inches fresh ginger, sliced into thin disks
1 tsp salt

(*continued*)

Place rice into a heavy pan with tight-fitting lid.
Add coconut milk, pandanus leaves tied into a knot, lemon grass, ginger, and salt. Stir.
Cover and bring to a rolling boil over medium heat.
Reduce heat immediately to lowest possible.
Let simmer for 10 minutes.
Remove from heat and allow to rest undisturbed in the pan (do not open the lid) for an additional 10–15 minutes before serving.
To serve, discard leaves and ginger. Mound rice on plates or bowls. Serve accompaniments in bowls for diners to help themselves.

Sweet Potato Porridge (Bubur Chacha)

This sweet coconut milk–based porridge has many variants throughout Southeast Asia. It is welcomed as a snack, at mid-morning or at mid-afternoon, or as a dessert.

¾ pound taro roots or semi-ripe plantain, peeled and cubed
¾ pound sweet potato, peeled and cubed
4 pandanus leaves, knotted or 4 drops pandanus essence
(available from Asian stores, omit if unavailable)
¼ cup sugar (or to taste)
¼ tsp salt
2 cans coconut milk

Boil taro and sweet potatoes with just enough water to cover with the pandanus leaves. Reduce heat and cook until the roots are tender.
Stir in sugar and salt.
When sugar is dissolved, stir in coconut milk.
Remove from heat immediately. Discard the leaves.
Serve hot or at room temperature.

Fried Noodles (Mee Goreng)

Although its name (*mee* is Chinese for noodles) makes one think that the origin of this dish is Chinese, *mee goreng* is actually a Singaporean Muslim Indian dish. This is often eaten as a snack or a light lunch.

3 TBS oil
1 onion, sliced thinly
1 pound ground beef or mutton
2 tomatoes, quartered
3 medium potatoes, boiled and diced
½ cabbage, finely shredded
1 pound cooked thick yellow noodles (or *udon*, Japanese fat wheat noodles), drained
2 cups bean sprouts
3 eggs, beaten

½ cup tomato paste, diluted in ½ cup hot water
1 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp chili sauce (optional)

Heat a wok over medium heat.
Add 2 tablespoons oil and stir-fry onion for 1–2 minutes.
Stir in beef, frying until it has changed color.
Increase heat to high; stir in tomatoes, potatoes, and cabbage; fry for 2–3 minutes.
Add noodles and bean sprouts; stir-fry for 2–3 minutes.
Clear a space in the middle of the wok; add 1 tablespoon oil.
When oil is hot, pour in eggs, stirring to scramble them, then mix well with the other ingredients in the wok.
Stir in diluted tomato paste, salt, sugar, and chili sauce.
Mix thoroughly with the other ingredients in the wok.
Remove from heat and serve at once into bowls or plates. Eat with chopsticks or a fork.

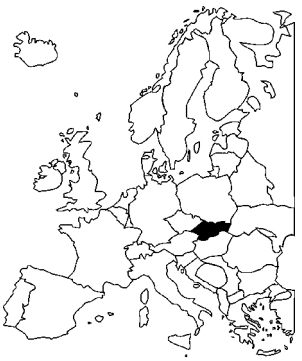
Peanut Pancake (Ban Jian Kway)

This is a common breakfast dish or snack in Singapore and Malaysia, most often sold by street hawkers to people in a hurry for work.

5 TBS raw peanuts, skinned
1 tsp sugar
1 egg, beaten lightly
2 TBS sugar (or to taste)
a pinch of salt
1¼ cups milk
2 TBS butter, melted
2 cups self-rising flour
butter for pan cooking

Heat wok over low-medium heat. Add peanuts and dry roast without burning until crisp and fragrant. Remove from pan. Crush or chop roughly with 1 teaspoon sugar in a blender or food processor. Transfer to a container; set aside.
In the same blender or food processor container, add egg, sugar, salt, milk, butter, and flour and blend until smooth.
Leave to rest for 1 hour or more.
Heat a 10- to 12-inch frying pan and add a pat of butter.
Pour ¼ of the batter onto the pan, tilting from side to side to spread the batter.
Cook, covered, on medium heat until bubbles form on top of the pancake.
Flip over.
Immediately scatter ¼ of the peanut mix on the pancake.
Fold in half, and remove from heat.
Serve hot.

SLOVAKIA



Slovakia lies between Poland and Austria in Central Europe. Formerly the eastern half of Czechoslovakia, the two nations decided to separate amicably after the fall of the Soviet empire. Largely hilly and mountainous, the country has been an industrial and mining center for a century. The climate is cool with cold winters.

The population is mostly Slovak, with small ethnic groups of Roma (gypsies) and Hungarians. The cuisine combines elements of Hungarian, Slavic, Turkish, and Russian cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Potatoes, wheat flour, cow and sheep cheese, cabbage, onions and garlic are the bases of the traditional food. Rice is widely eaten.
- Pork is the favorite meat, often cooked with fruit from the many orchards. Other meats include beef, chicken, and freshwater fish. Hams, bacon, and sausages are common ways of preserving meat.
- Vegetables: beans, maize, lentils, cabbages.
- Fruit: apples, pears, peaches, apricots, cherries, plums, grapes, and imported fruit such as oranges, kiwi, banana.
- Cheeses, some smoked, such as *ostiepok*, *parenica*, *korbacik*.

Typical Dishes

- Dumplings filled with sheep's cheese topped with bacon (*bryndzove halusky*) is often regarded as the national dish.
- Soups: sour cabbage soup with smoked pork sausage, mushrooms, and plums for Christmas (also served at weddings to revive guests); garlic-chicken soup; tripe soup.
- Fish dishes: Hungarian-style hot paprika and fish soup.
- Pork dishes: Hungarian-style pork goulash; fried pork steak.
- Vegetable dishes: peppers stuffed with meat and rice cooked in tomato sauce; vegetable soup; mushroom soup. Potato dishes: mashed, baked potatoes; French fries (*hranolky*), boiled; croquettes.
- Rice often served flavored with curry (*kari*), or with peas or mushrooms.
- Snacks: codfish salad sandwich with mayonnaise and vegetables (*treska*), originally from the Bratislava region; crepes; dumplings.

- Desserts: most popular ones are crepes (*palacinky*) with jam; farmer's cheese and raisins (*s tvarohom a hrozienkami*); ice cream with chocolate sauce; sweet noodles with poppy seeds; stewed fruit (*kompoty*).
- Pastries: apple-filled flaky pastry, *strudla*; cakes; cookies.
- Drinks: fruit juices, carbonated bottled drinks, coffee, tea, beer, wine (*vino*); mulled wine in winter. Nonalcoholic young wine (*burciak*) is drunk in early September for harvest festivals.

JUNIPER BERRIES

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day, and plenty of snacks. Most meals tend to be hearty. Dining out is common.
- Table settings are European standard.
- Bread is very important and always present on the table. Most people eat bread for breakfast and with the evening meal. Bread differs from region to region.
- Blueberry and cranberry preserves and pickled wild mushrooms are served with meals.
- Breakfast: tends to be hearty, with fresh fruit, cheeses, eggs, sausage slices, and warm, freshly baked breads. Largely eaten with coffee or milk.
- Lunch: the main meal of the day, with warm and cold appetizers of cheese, ham, smoked sausage; fish soup with paprika; pork goulash; side dishes of dumplings with vegetables; dessert of crepes with jam. Salads (of mixed or single vegetables—cabbage, tomato, cucumber) often accompany the main dish.
- Evening meal: soup; fried dishes, usually mushrooms, cauliflower, cheese; fruit compote.
- Alcohol is an integral part of dining in Slovakia. Most meals start with a shot of *slivovica*, a brandy made of plums, or *borovicka*, a juniper berry brandy. Wines are drunk with the main meals.

Potato Soup (Zemiakova Polievka)

Many types of soups are made, combining vegetables with local smoked meats. This is served as a first course or as a light meal on its own with bread and a salad.

2 TBS dried mushrooms, softened in boiling water for 30 minutes, and chopped
1 pound potatoes, peeled and cubed
6 strips smoked bacon, chopped
¼ tsp caraway seeds
¼ tsp marjoram
5 cups water
¼ cup butter
1 large onion, chopped fine
1 garlic clove, crushed
¼ cup flour
salt and black pepper to taste
1 egg yolk
1 cup sour cream
chopped parsley

(*continued*)

Bring the mushrooms, potatoes, bacon, caraway seeds, and marjoram to a boil in the water.
Simmer for 20 minutes.
Meanwhile, heat butter and fry onion until golden. Add garlic and fry one more minute. Remove from butter and add to soup.
Gradually sprinkle flour onto hot butter, stirring constantly to make a roux.
Add some of the liquid stock, 1 tablespoon at a time, to thin the roux.
Add roux to the soup, stirring constantly, until thickened.
Remove from heat.
Cool the soup and pour into a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth and return to the pan until heated through. Season with salt and pepper.
Combine the egg yolk and sour cream.
Remove soup from heat, and stir in the egg-cream mixture.
Garnish with parsley and serve at once.

Drop Noodles and Cabbage (Haluski Kapusta)

More than any other dish, this is considered a classical Slovak dish that expatriates remember with nostalgia.

½ pound butter
2 onions, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 small cabbage, core discarded, shredded
salt and pepper to taste

Heat butter until foam subsides. Sauté onions in butter until translucent.
Add garlic and fry for 1 more minute.
Add cabbage. Cook until well browned, stirring constantly.
Season to taste.
Mix in noodles and cook for an additional minute until noodles are warmed through.
Serve with a meat dish.

Noodles

2 eggs, beaten
1 cup flour
¼ tsp salt
½ tsp baking powder
water to moisten

Mix all ingredients thoroughly with a wooden spoon to form a thin but fluffy dough.
Boil a large pot of salted water.
Using a teaspoon dipped in water, drop small quantities (about ½ teaspoon) of dough into gently boiling water. Dough should puff up and rise to the top (if it falls apart, add some more flour). Ensure you do not drop so many that they stick together.
Allow 5 minutes to cook thoroughly, then remove ready noodles from water with slotted spoon.

Repeat, dipping spoon into cold water between dough bits, until all the dough is gone.

Sausage Casserole (Oravska Pochutka)

This dish is from the Orava region, served for a midday or evening meal.

2 TBS oil
1 large onion, sliced fine
1 TBS sugar
salt and pepper to taste
¼ tsp cumin powder
3 juniper berries
½ pound sauerkraut
1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and cubed, boiled until tender
½ pound spiced or garlic sausage (e.g., kielbasa), chopped

Heat oil over medium heat and fry onion until brown.
Add sugar and cook until caramelized.
Add seasoning, cumin, and juniper berries.
Add sauerkraut. Stir well and simmer until tender, about 10 minutes.
Meanwhile place cooked potatoes in a layer in an oiled deep baking dish. Top with sausage. Ladle sauerkraut mixture on top.
Bake in a 360°F oven until lightly browned on top.
Serve warm.

Pumpkin (Tekvicovy Privarok)

Serve as an accompaniment to sausages and boiled potatoes for an evening meal.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped fine
salt to taste
1 tsp sweet paprika
2 pounds pumpkin, peeled and grated
1½ cups cream
2 ounces flour
1 heaping TBS dill, finely chopped
2 tsp vinegar
1 tsp sugar

Heat oil and sauté onion until light brown.
Stir in salt and paprika.
Lower heat; add pumpkin and simmer until pumpkin is tender, about 10 minutes. Add water if needed to ensure the mixture does not burn.
Mix cream with flour and dill. Add mixture to the tender pumpkin, and bring to a boil.
Add vinegar, sugar, and salt to give a sweet/sour dish.

Potato Casserole (Bryndzove Halusky)

This is considered as the national dish by most Slovaks.

1 TBS butter
4 strips bacon, chopped well
1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and grated fine
2 eggs
1 cup whole-wheat flour
salt to taste
boiling salted water
1 cup *brinza* (or substitute feta or any other hard, salted ewe cheese), rinsed of brine and crumbled

Heat butter until frothy. Fry bacon until crisp. Drain and reserve with some of the fat.
Mix potatoes with eggs, flour, and salt to make a soft dough (add a little water if needed).
With floured hands, shape into golf-ball-sized dumplings and toss them into rapidly boiling salted water.
When they float, remove and drain, and, while still hot, toss with the cheese.
Place in a casserole, and top with bacon and fat.
Bake in a hot oven (400°F) or under a grill for 2–3 minutes until warmed through and cheese is slightly melted.
Serve hot.

Pork Stew (Segedinsky Gulas)

This Hungarian-style dish is served for the midday meal.

2 TBS oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 pound boneless pork, cut into cubes
½ tsp cumin powder
1 tsp sweet paprika
½ tsp ground black pepper
2 cups stock (or 2 bouillon cubes dissolved in 2 cups hot water)
1 pound sauerkraut
1 cup cream
salt to taste

Heat oil in a pot and sauté onion until brown.
Add pork, brown quickly, then add spices and half the stock.
Let simmer for 15 minutes, until the meat is half tender, then add sauerkraut.
Let simmer another 10–15 minutes, or until the meat is completely tender; add cream and let cook for a further 5 minutes.
Add and blend in the rest of the stock.
Taste and add salt if needed.
Cook for an additional 5 minutes.
Serve with potato dumplings.

Christmas Rice Pudding (Koch)

This is a rich variant of the Christmas cereal porridge that is usually served.

2 pints milk
8 ounces short-grain rice, rinsed and drained
4 ounces butter
2 ounces sugar
a pinch of salt
grated rind of 1 lemon
4 eggs, separated
½ cup seedless raisins
butter for greasing

Put the milk and rice in a heavy saucepan over low heat; simmer gently until the rice has absorbed all the milk, about 15–20 minutes. Cool.
Cream butter, sugar, salt, rind, and egg yolks, until light and creamy.
Beat egg whites to stiff peaks.
Mix cooked rice into creamed butter and fold in egg whites. Gently mix in the raisins.
Place mixture into a buttered casserole dish.
Bake for approximately 40 minutes at 320°F until golden on top.

SLOVENIA

Slovenia was formerly a part of Yugoslavia in the western Balkans. The terrain is varied—mountainous and rocky to coastal plains. The climate ranges from cold to temperate, enabling wheat, corn, fruits, vegetables, and livestock to be raised.

Slovenia borders on four states (Hungary, Italy, Austria, and Croatia) with established and distinct national cuisines, and Slovenians have borrowed and adapted culinary specialties from each.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: maize, wheat, potatoes, barley, buckwheat.
- Pork, mutton, goat, beef, chicken, goose, duck, turkey, eggs. Sausages and preserved meats include *krvavice* (blood sausages), *pechenice* (frying sausages), *chelodec* (similar to Scottish haggis), and *prchut* (ham).
- Fresh-water fish (carp, trout); salted, dried, or smoked fish.
- Milk, butter, cheese, cream.
- Cabbage, lettuce, onion, potato, beans, broad beans, lentils, chicory, cucumber, pumpkin, eggplant, *regrad* wild lettuce (gathered in early spring), wild mushrooms (gathered in the fall). Pickled vegetables, particularly turnip (*kisla repa*) and cabbage (*kislo zelje*).
- Apple, grape, pear, plum, chestnut, walnut, hazelnut. Wild berries: strawberry, blackberry, blueberry.
- Seasonings: marjoram, mint, melissa, sage, thyme, bay leaf, pepper, cinnamon; bacon, lard, dripping.

Typical Dishes

- Bread (white and black) from wheat, rye, barley, corn, or a mixture of these is eaten with every meal.
- Soups: in some areas soups were so important that they were eaten as the main dish for every meal, with two soups on special events. *Chtajerska*, sour soup of veal, offal, and sour cream. *Prechganka*, potato and beef soup. Many soups are thickened with millet or buckwheat meal, or cream and sour milk. Stew (*obara*) of meat, potatoes, herbs, and buckwheat.
- Fish dishes: eel in wine, grilled cuttlefish, stuffed calamari, prawns in wine, fish soup. Istrian stockfish (*bakalar*) for special days, Christmas, and Good Friday,

pounded until tender, dressed with olive oil and garlic, and served with polenta or boiled potatoes.
- Meat dishes: *bograch*, with its origins in Hungarian goulash; *pogacha* (savory pie), filled with crackling, bacon, or bacon and onions.
- *Blinci*, broken unleavened round bread, moistened and served with melted butter and fried onions, is served traditionally in some places on Christmas Eve.
- Pastries: many-layered cakes with as many as nine layers of different fillings (apples, cheese curd, poppy seed, walnuts, etc.), topped with cream and egg yolks (*gibanice*); a festive molded cake, *potica*, with various fillings (nuts, cocoa/chocolate, crisp pork crackling (roasted or fried pork skin), crumbled bacon, dried fruit, honey, mint, tarragon), sold by bakeries and patisseries.

MELISSA

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks, particularly in winter.
- Settings today are European standard. Traditional farming families sat around a large bowl or pot with shared food, into which were dipped wooden spoons, and from which the whole family ate.
- Bread is always on the table.
- Breakfast: porridge (*mochnik*) or gruel (*kacha*); polenta with cottage cheese.
- Lunch: *chganci*, the national dish, made of boiled buckwheat flour, covered with hot lard and crackling; roast goose; pickled turnips; sweet or fruit.
- Supper: polenta, potato and beef soup, preserved meats, pickled cabbage, sweet or fruit.
- Snacks: *chunka* (ham), baked in bread; *blinci* (flat breads); *ocvirki* (pork crackling).
- Drinks: fruit juices, carbonated bottled drinks, beer, wine, coffee, tea.

Potato Soup (Prechganka)

This is often eaten for both lunch and supper.

4 large potatoes, peeled and cut into thick French fries
1 large carrot, scraped and shredded
2 TBS parsley, minced fine
1 medium tomato, chopped
1 tsp caraway seeds
¼ tsp garlic, minced
2 tsp salt
1 bay leaf
2 quarts water
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 TBS butter
2 TBS flour
½ cup sour cream

In a stewing pot, simmer the potatoes, carrot, parsley, tomato, caraway seeds, garlic, salt, and bay leaf in water until tender, about 25–30 minutes.
In a frying pan, sweat onion in butter. Add flour and cook, stirring until light brown.

(*continued*)

Add a ladle of the broth from the potatoes and cook, stirring until smooth.
Stir mixture into potatoes, and cook for a couple more minutes to take the raw taste from the flour. Remove the bay leaf.
Blend a ladleful of soup with sour cream and add mixture to soup.
Serve at once.

Barley Gruel with Smoked Pork (Krasci)

This dish is often made with little or no meat. As in many other peasant dishes, a little bit of meat was stretched as far as possible. This was often eaten for most meals.

½ pound barley
½ pound dried beans (pinto or navy)
water as needed
1 bay leaf
½ pound smoked pork or bacon, cubed
1 carrot, scraped and chopped
2 potatoes, peeled and cubed
¼ cup parsley, minced fine
salt and pepper to taste
2 cloves garlic
1 tomato, chopped

In a large stewing pot, soak barley and beans together overnight in water to cover.
The following day, add water if necessary so that beans and barley are covered, and simmer with bay leaf for 20 minutes.
Add pork, carrot, potatoes, and parsley. Simmer for 1½ hours. Add enough water for a gruel-like consistency.
Add salt, pepper, and garlic. Cook for 5 minutes, then add tomatoes and simmer for an additional 5 minutes.
Serve with coarse rye bread.

Deep-Fried Chicken (Pohana Pichka)

Originally an Austrian dish, this was adopted by Slovenians.

2 cups lard or vegetable oil
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS thyme
1 chicken, cut into serving pieces, washed, and patted dry
2 TBS milk
3 eggs
1 cup flour
5 TBS dry bread crumbs

Heat lard in a deep frying pan to 370°F.
Mix salt, pepper, and thyme and rub over chicken.
Beat milk and eggs to a froth.
Dredge each piece of chicken in flour, dip in egg mixture, then roll in bread crumbs.

Deep-fry the pieces for 15–20 minutes until golden brown.
Drain. Serve hot with salad and pickles.

Dandelion Salad

Wild greens were, for many, a major mainstay. They were also traditionally a welcome treat in the spring, after months of eating only pickled vegetables, before cultivated vegetables could be gathered. Wild greens, along with mushrooms and berries, are still gathered. Make sure if you are collecting dandelion shoots that they have not been sprayed with pesticide or insecticide.

10 ounces dandelion shoots, washed and drained (or use other strong-flavored greens such as arugula)
2 medium potatoes, cooked, peeled, and diced
1 hard-boiled egg, peeled and sliced
1 clove garlic, finely minced
2 TBS salad oil
vinegar to taste
salt to taste

Spread greens in a salad bowl.
Add hot potatoes and egg.
Sprinkle with garlic.
Mix oil, vinegar, and salt. Pour over salad and toss well.
Serve with fresh rye bread.

Buckwheat Balls (Ubrnenik)

Buckwheat, a cold-hardy grain, was the staple of most communities in Central and Eastern Europe (see box "Buckwheat").

2 TBS butter
1 pound buckwheat flour (available from Russian stores and from Japanese stores as *soba* flour)
2 cups milk
1 cup cream
salt to taste

Heat butter over medium heat. When foam subsides, sprinkle in flour and stir to incorporate into butter.
Scald milk and cream in a separate pan. Add salt.
Pour milk slowly over flour, stirring rapidly. Allow to cook until relatively stiff and then cool.
With moistened hands, form 1-inch diameter balls from the mixture.
Place on a plate and serve mounded with cottage cheese.

BUCKWHEAT

Buckwheat is an ancient cultivated grain (not a grass but a herbaceous plant: *Fagopyrum esculentum*) originating in southwestern Asia. It has been cultivated for around 4,000 years. In East Asia it is mainly used for noodles (*soba*). In Eastern Europe, especially in the northern Balkans and the Slavic countries, due to the plant's preference for cooler climate and poorer soil it is a major food crop, usually consumed as *kasha* (porridge). It is also used commonly for savory pancakes—*blinis* in Russia and *galette* in Brittany—which have a pleasant, nutty, and slightly bitter flavor. In Eastern Europe it is associated with peasants and their life as the major food source. Honey from buckwheat flowers is also prized.

Cake Roll (Koroshka Sharkel)

Stuffed rolls are common Slovenian dishes, either savory or, as in this case, filled with dried fruit and eaten as dessert.

1 ounce yeast
1 pound flour
3 ounces sugar
1½ cups milk
4 ounces butter
3 egg yolks
a pinch of salt
8 ounces seedless raisins
1 tsp cinnamon powder mixed with 4 ounces sugar
1 egg, beaten

Mix yeast with two teaspoons flour, 1 teaspoon sugar, and ¼ cup milk. Leave in a warm, draft-free place to rise for about 10 minutes.
Beat butter with egg yolks and the remaining sugar until smooth.
Add flour, remaining milk, and salt and mix thoroughly.
Add the yeast mixture.
Mix well, then knead thoroughly on a floured surface for 10 minutes until elastic.
Return to an oiled bowl and place, covered by damp towel, in a warm, draft-free place for 1 hour, or until doubled in volume.
Place dough on floured board and roll out to a thickness of ½ inch or less. Sprinkle with raisins and cinnamon-sugar mixture.
Roll up and place in a lightly greased 12-inch loaf pan.
Allow the dough to rise again in the pan.
Brush top with beaten egg.
Bake in a medium hot oven (375°F) until brown.
Allow to cool, then cut into slices to serve.

Fruit Ravioli (Sadni Zhlikrofi)

Borrowed and adapted from Italian originals, these fruit ravioli are served as dessert.

Dough

1½ cups flour
2½ tsp oil
1 egg
1 egg white
¼ tsp salt
few drops water
1 egg white, well beaten with 2 TBS water, for bonding ravioli

Place flour in a large bowl; make a hollow in the center and in it put the oil, egg, egg white, and salt. Mix well and gather into a ball, adding water if needed to achieve this.
Knead the dough thoroughly on a floured surface until shiny and elastic, about 10 minutes. Cover with a damp kitchen towel and allow to rest for at least 30 minutes.
Divide dough into four portions.
On a floured surface, roll out one portion into a rectangular shape, as thin as possible.
Cover this with a damp kitchen towel to keep it from drying out while rolling out the rest.
Roll out the other portion, as much as possible matching the previous one in shape.
Fill the first rolled out pastry sheet with tablespoons of filling every two inches.
Using a pastry brush or a finger generously dipped in the egg white and water bonding, mark out a grid of horizontal and vertical lines on the pastry, enclosing the filling.
Place the second rolled out pastry sheet over the first, and press firmly around each filling and along the grid.
With a pastry wheel, ravioli cutter, or knife, cut the pastry sheet into squares along the grid.
Place the filled and cut out *zhlikrofi* on wax paper.
Roll out, fill, and cut the remaining dough portions likewise.
Drop the *zhlikrofi* into 10 pints of boiling salted water and cook for 8–10 minutes, or until tender.
Drain well and place on a plate; dress with sour cream and cinnamon sugar; or melted butter, toasted breadcrumbs, and cinnamon sugar.

Filling

¾ pound mixed dried fruits: apples, pears, seedless raisins, figs
½ cup butter
1 cup bread crumbs
¼ cup sugar
1 TBS cinnamon

Soak the dried fruits in warm water for 1 hour, then drain them and chop them finely.
In a frying pan, melt the butter over low heat, add bread crumbs and fry until golden. Remove from heat.
Stir in the sugar, cinnamon, and chopped fruits, and mix thoroughly.

(*continued*)

Cinnamon Sugar

1 TBS cinnamon **¼ cup sugar**

Mix well the cinnamon and sugar.

SOMALIA

Somalia, on the extreme northeast coast of Africa, was under French, British, and Italian colonial rule until the 1960s. The terrain varies from scrubby plains and desert to mountains, with a hot and arid climate. The major cash crop are bananas, raised in the south with tropical subsistence crops. The north relies on dates and nomadic herding of cattle, sheep, goats, and camels. Coastal fishing is an additional food source.

The population is largely Somali, with minorities of Bantu- and Arab-speaking groups. Somalis are virtually all Sunni Muslims. The cuisine has elements of Arab, Middle Eastern, and Italian cooking.

Foodstuffs

- For northern rural Somalis, milk is the staple (camel herders may drink up to 2 gallons a day). Corn, millet, sorghum, beans, fruit, and vegetables are the staples in the south.
- Imported rice.
- Camel meat, particularly the fat of the hump (*gol*), is in high demand, but since camels are used for transportation, these are not often available. Goat, sheep, or lamb are other favorites.
- Dairy: cow's, sheep's, goat's, and camel's milk; butter; clarified butter (ghee); yogurt; camel's milk cheese (*jinow*).
- Banana, orange, coconut, mango, date.

Typical Dishes

- Breads (*canjeelo* and *muufo*) and porridge (*soor*) made of sorghum, millet, or maize. Bread rolls (*rooti*) and flat breads (*sabaayad*).
- Beans usually served with butter or mixed with corn.
- Roasted goat is a delicacy.
- Sauces and stews with onions, garlic, tomatoes, hot spices, vegetables, or meat.
- *Sambusa*, pies filled with meat, eaten during Ramadan for breaking the fast.
- Drinks: tea, usually flavored with cinnamon or cardamom.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day.
- Somali dining tends to be a hurried and almost informal affair. People assemble, eat, and leave without much fuss, sharing food from a common dish, which they take with the right hand only.
- Breakfast: a flat bread called *canjeelo* (similar to Ethiopian *injera*) or *laxoo* (pronounced "la-khu"), or a porridge made of millet or cornmeal. Sometimes, thinly sliced fried liver with onions.
- Midday: the main meal, consisting of rice or noodles (Italian pasta) with sauce and sometimes meat.
- The evening meal is light, usually including bread, yogurt, beans, *muufo* (patties made of oats or corn).

Veal with Tomato Topping (Huris Hilib)

The original dish is made with camel calf, a preferred meat in Somalia. In the absence of camel, veal or turkey is a good substitute. The main dish is a local version of an Arab dish eaten throughout the coast of Africa and Arabia, called *harees*.

½ green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced
2 small potatoes, peeled and quartered
2 TBS oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 pound veal or turkey, cut into ½-inch cubes
1 TBS fresh basil, minced
½ tsp very finely minced garlic
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp white pepper
1 large tomato, sliced

Boil green pepper and potatoes in a saucepan with water to cover until potatoes are almost done, about 15 minutes. Mash together and set aside.
Heat oil and fry onion until translucent.
Add meat and brown on all sides. Remove from heat.
Stir in potato mixture, basil, garlic, salt, and pepper.
Place in a buttered 9×13-inch baking dish. Top with slices of tomato.
Cover tightly with foil and bake for 20–30 minutes in a preheated 325°F oven.
Serve hot over rice.

Chicken Suqaar

One of Somalia's favorite dishes, and, but for the fractiousness that characterizes modern Somalia, would probably be declared the national dish.

⅛ cup oil
¾ cup onion, chopped
1 tsp garlic, minced
1 cup carrots, peeled and sliced
1 cup green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 cube chicken stock, crumbled
1 cup water
¼ cup cilantro, chopped
1 pound cooked chicken meat, diced

Heat oil and sauté the onion until softened.
Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Stir in carrots and pepper, and fry for 5 minutes.
Add chicken stock and water; simmer for 5 minutes.
Add cilantro and chicken and simmer until heated through, about 5 minutes.
Serve hot over rice.

Meat Pies (Sambusa)

A Somali variation on a dish that is popular throughout the Middle East. *Sambusa* are eaten in Somalia to break the Ramadan fast in the evenings.

2 cups flour
½ tsp salt
2 TBS butter
1 cup water
2 TBS ghee or vegetable oil
1 leek, chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 pounds ground beef (substitute turkey or chicken or lamb)
2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp ground cardamom
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
2 TBS all-purpose flour
¼ cup water
oil for deep-frying

In a food processor, mix flour, salt, butter, and water just until the mixture comes together in a ball.
Remove and knead on a floured surface for 10 minutes until dough is elastic.
Rub with ¼ teaspoon oil; set aside for at least 30 minutes in a warm draft-free place, covered with a damp kitchen towel.
Divide dough into 2 portions.
Roll out one portion into a rectangle ¼-inch thick.
Butter the surface, fold over twice to form a square, and reroll to about ⅛-inch thick, or as thin as you can.
Cut into 4×4-inch squares. Repeat for the other dough portion. Cover the cut-out pastry squares with a damp kitchen towel to prevent drying out.
Prepare the filling: heat ghee in a large pan over medium heat. Add leek, onion, and garlic. Cook, stirring, until onions are translucent.

(*continued*)

Add beef, and cook for 10 minutes, or until about halfway done.
Season with cumin, cardamom, salt, and pepper. Mix well, and continue cooking until beef has browned.
Place 2–3 tablespoons of meat mixture in the middle of each pastry square.
Fold corners to form a triangle.
Seal with a paste mixed from the flour and water.
Continue to fill the remaining dough in the same way.
Heat oil to 365°F in a deep fryer or a heavy frying pan.
Fry *sambusa* a few at a time until golden brown.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve as a snack.

Spiced Meat and Rice (Bariis isku Dhex-Karis)

A baked dish made with layers of spiced meat and rice. This is a festive dish that combines two favorites: meat and flavored rice.

½ cup plain yogurt
salt to taste
2 tsp cardamom powder
1 pound ground meat (beef, lamb, chicken, or turkey)
2 cups long-grain rice
5 cups lightly salted water
3 cardamom pods
6 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
2 onions, minced fine
½ cup cilantro, chopped
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
5 cloves garlic, pounded into a paste
½ tsp coriander powder
½ tsp cumin powder
2 cups water
2 tomatoes, chopped
salt to taste
2 TBS fresh mint leaves, minced fine
½ tsp cloves
1 tsp cinnamon
about 20 threads saffron, dissolved in 2 TBS warm milk

Mix the yogurt, salt and ½ teaspoon cardamom powder, and blend thoroughly with the meat. Set aside for at least 30 minutes.
Boil rice in salted boiling water with cardamom pods until rice is almost cooked, for about 15 minutes.
Strain the rice and set aside.
Prepare the spiced meat: heat 2 tablespoons ghee in a heavy pot. Sauté the onions and cilantro until the onions are light golden.
Stir in ginger, garlic paste, and meat; cook on high heat for 10–15 minutes.
Stir in coriander, cumin, and water.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until meat is almost done and water has been absorbed.
Add chopped tomatoes, salt, the remaining cardamom powder, and 1 tablespoon mint.
Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Turn off heat.
In a 9×13-inch baking dish, spread half of the meat in one layer.

Top with half of the rice.
Sprinkle with cloves, cinnamon, saffron and milk, and the remaining mint.
Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons ghee.
Repeat with the remaining meat, rice, spices and herbs, and remaining 2 tablespoons ghee.
Cover tightly with foil.
Bake in a preheated 375°F oven for 30 minutes.

Spiced Mangoes

These are served for dessert after the main meal, or as a snack.

6 firm mangoes
1 can coconut milk
2–3 TBS sugar
½ tsp cinnamon powder
½ tsp coriander powder

Peel the mangoes.
Slice downward (but not through) on either side of the pit, separating the "cheeks," but keep the mango intact.
Put mangoes into a saucepan with the coconut milk, sugar, cinnamon, and coriander.
Cover and simmer on lowest heat until sauce thickens. Stir occasionally and check that the coconut milk is not burning.
Serve chilled.

Papaya Rings

This is a popular dessert or snack.

1 green (unripe) papaya
1 can coconut milk
½ tsp coriander powder
½ tsp cinnamon
2 TBS sugar

Peel the papaya and cut crosswise into about ⅛-inch rings. Discard seeds.
Carefully cut each ring into spaghetti-like spirals, starting at the outer edge and going round and round to the center.
Place strands of papaya into pan and cover with coconut milk.
Simmer for 5 minutes.
Add coriander, cinnamon, and sugar, and simmer for 5 minutes more.
Serve chilled.

SOUTH AFRICA

Located at the southernmost tip of Africa, South Africa was originally settled by Hottentots and Khoisians (Bushmen) and, from the sixteenth century onward, by Bantu tribes and Dutch, British, and French settlers. Topography varies, and climate ranges from temperate to subtropical, except in the Karoo and Kalahari deserts. With very fertile land, a range of grains (chiefly maize, wheat), fruit, and vegetables are raised for local consumption and export.

The population comprises predominantly Bantu groups (including Zulu, Sotho, Ndebele) and minorities of South Asians and Malays (descendants of colonial workers brought in during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), Europeans, and Bushmen.

South African cuisine blends all these influences. Native African cuisine is largely vegetable stews, maize (*mealie*) meal porridge, and roasted meats. Dutch immigrants (Boers) introduced barbecued meats, one-pot stews, and baked goods. The English, dominant in South Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, introduced sauces, tea (as a drink and as a meal), and other foods. Cape Malays—descendants of slaves and servants brought by the Dutch—introduced Southeast Asian ways of cooking, adapted to South Africa, including *sambals*, spices, and preserved fish. Indians, brought initially as workers during the nineteenth century, brought curries and other Indian foods. Other European immigrants, such as Huguenot French and Portuguese, introduced dishes such as *piri-piri* chicken and baked goods, now considered authentically South African. The long period of *apartheid* (when these groups were legally separated) means that the real blending of these traditions started only in the past two decades.

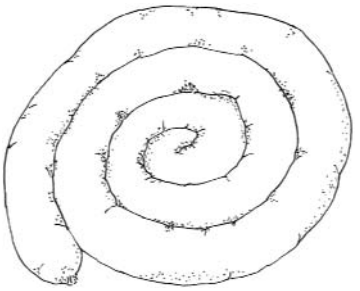
Foodstuffs

- Rice, breads—*mealie* (corn) bread and fried corn bread (*vetkoek*), flat breads such as *naan*, French loaves.
- Meat: beef, mutton, pork, chicken, guinea fowl. *Biltong*—dried meat strips similar to jerky—are eaten as is or cooked.
- Seafood: many varieties of fish and shellfish. Two local specialties are rock lobster and a meaty fish called *snoek*. Also crayfish and salt cod.
- Dairy: milk, cheeses, yogurt, buttermilk, butter.
- Vegetables: tomato, potato, green beans, cabbage, *mealies* (maize), sorghum, pumpkin and squash, beans and other legumes.

- Fruits: *naartjes* (small native citrus), peach, mango, citrus, apricot, grape, pomegranate, apple, pear, quince, and melon.
- Seasonings: Indian, Malay, and Portuguese spices and condiments, such as *atjar* and *blatjang*, which are made with local fruits cooked with garlic, hot chili peppers, onions, and often curry powder; *piri-piri* (Portuguese chili sauce); curry powder.

Typical Dishes

- Cold buttermilk soup with cinnamon and nutmeg.
- Salads and side dishes: cold potato salad; bean salad; mixed green salads; and carrot, beetroot, and pasta salads.
- Meat grilled on an open fire (*braaivleis* or, more commonly, *braai*); spiced minced liver wrapped in caul fat (*skilpadjies*, or "little tortoises"); salted ribs; *boerewors* ("farmer's sausage") spiced with coriander. Meat/poultry: boer chicken pot-pie with hard-boiled egg and ham; curried ground beef or lamb with nuts and fruits, topped with custard (*bobotie*); braised chicken with green chili peppers.
- Fish and seafood: braised or curried crayfish; Cape Malay pickled *snoek*; *soufflé́d* rock lobster with lemon butter; salt cod with potatoes and tomatoes (*gesmoorde vis*); salt cod with hot chili peppers.
- Stews (*bredie*) of meat and/or vegetables; meat, onions, and vegetables, simmered in wine and stock in a cast iron pot (*potjiekos*); green bean, cabbage, pumpkin, and tomato stew.
- Indian- and Malay-derived dishes: yellow rice with raisins (*geelrys*); curries served with carrot or cucumber *sambals*, *atjar* (pickles), or *blatjang* (chutney); fish and rice (Cape *kedgeree*); skewered meats (*sosaties*); meat patties (Cape Malay *frikkadels*).



BOEREWORS

- Desserts: cakes, pies, custards—custard and cinnamon pie (*melktert*); tangerine and ginger custard (*chipolata*); coconut pie (*klappertert*). Pastries and baked goods: twice-baked sweet cakes (similar to *biscotti*; *beskuit* or rusk), typically served with coffee in the morning; cardamom and coconut cookies (*caramongscraps*); braided pastry crullers in syrup (*koeksisters*); cookies dusted with sugar and chopped nuts (*krakelinge*); Dutch spice and wine cookies (*soetkoekies*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day for most people, though there are great differences in timing and way of dining in different ethnic communities. A mix of African, South and Southeast Asian, and European cuisines is common and many people eat a variety at any meal.
- Europeanized households generally dine using standard European place settings. Traditional African households dine around a mat or a table on which are placed pots with the staple porridge (variously called *nsima*, *sadza*, etc.) and a sauce. Diners take a handful of the staple, form it into a ball, make a depression in the ball, and dip into sauce or stew and eat. Malay and Indian communities sometimes eat with bowls and a variety of small side dishes.

- Breakfast: eggs, bacon, sausages, mushrooms, toast, smoked salmon and trout, corn fritters, Eggs benedict, flapjack stacks, European-style pastries and coffee, toast and preserves, porridge and cream. African households might have a meal based on porridge with a sauce. Indian and Cape Malay households might have rice with side dishes.
- Lunch: one- or two-course meal for most. Sometimes sandwiches or soup.
- Evening meal: supper, or tea, or dinner. Usually the main meal of the day with several courses.
- Snacks: fruit, ice cream, cookies, sandwiches, a shaving of *biltong*. Many people stop for tea break—a cup of English tea, sandwiches and/or cakes—in the late afternoon. For some people this is extended and elaborated into the evening meal. Sunday high tea, with savory canapés, sandwiches, and *gateaux*, together with lots of milky tea is an institution for those who can afford it.
- Drinks served with meals: native corn beer called *mechow*; wines; tropical fruit drinks, similar to smoothies; lager beer; Rooibos tea (also called bush tea, now drunk worldwide); carbonated bottled drinks. Coffee after meals.

Corn Bread (Mielie Brood)

This steamed corn bread is a favorite of the Zulu peoples of the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

2 cups cornmeal
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 TBS sugar
4 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
cold water

Mix all the ingredients together with enough water to form a stiff dough.
Set aside for 15 minutes
Place the mixture in a greased loaf pan. (Traditionally, a 1-quart can [recycled from canned vegetables] is used, producing a tall, round loaf.)
Steam over (not in) boiling water for 1½ hours, or until done.
Cool, remove from pan, slice, and serve.

Yellow Rice (Geelrys)

This is a South African version of *pilaf*, either imported by Indian or Malay laborers and adopted by most South Africans as their own, with a Boer name, or brought by Dutch East India sailors from Indonesia. It is usually accompanied by a meat or fish dish.

2 cups rice, rinsed and drained
3 cups boiling water
2 TBS butter
1 TBS brown sugar
1 TBS turmeric
1 tsp salt
3 TBS raisins

Place rice with the remaining ingredients in a heavy covered pot.
Bring rapidly to a boil and stir once.
Reduce heat to lowest possible; simmer, covered, until rice is tender, for 25 to 30 minutes.
Remove from heat and allow to sit for 5 minutes. If rice is not done, or there is water in the bottom, return to lowest heat for another 5 minutes.
Serve hot.

Sorrel Soup

A sour-tasting herb that grows wild throughout Africa and Europe, sorrel is rich in vitamin C. Serve this with corn bread and butter.

1 pound sorrel, washed (or substitute spinach and ¼ cup lemon juice)
4 cups beef or vegetable stock
1 onion, chopped fine
2 potatoes, peeled and diced
1 TBS chopped fresh thyme
2 TBS chopped fresh chives
salt, pepper to taste

Soak sorrel in salted water for 15 minutes.
Drain and chop fine.
Heat stock in a heavy pot. Add sorrel, onion, and potatoes.
Cook, covered, over low heat for 30–45 minutes.
Stir in herbs. Taste, and add salt and pepper.
Serve hot.

Minced Meat Casserole (Bobotie)

This is a dish from the descendants of Dutch settlers—the Boers—who have a great influence on South African cuisine. This is served for lunch or dinner, with rice and a vegetable dish.

1 onion, chopped
2 TBS butter
1 slice white bread
scant ½ pint milk
2 eggs, beaten
1 pound ground beef
1–1½ tsp curry powder
juice of 1 lemon
12 almonds, chopped
8 dried apricots, soaked and chopped
½ cup chutney, chopped
salt and pepper to taste

Sauté onion in butter until golden brown. Remove from heat.
Soak bread in milk; squeeze dry. Add eggs to milk.

(*continued*)

Mix meat, bread, onion, curry powder, lemon juice, almonds, apricots, chutney, salt, and pepper.
Add half of the egg mixture and blend well.
Place in a buttered 9×13-inch baking dish or casserole, or four individual ramekins.
Bake for 20 minutes in a preheated 350°F oven.
Pour the remaining egg mixture over the meat in the casserole.
Return to oven; continue baking until egg sets, for about 15 minutes.
Serve immediately.

Marinated Skewered Meat (Sosaties)

Barbecues, or *braai*, are very popular forms of eating out or entertaining at home.

2 cups vinegar
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
10 dried apricot halves, diced
½ tsp curry powder
1 tsp salt
2 TBS sugar
1½ cups water
leg of lamb or pork shoulder, about 2½ pounds, cubed
½ tsp pepper
½ pound salt pork or fatty bacon, cubed
2 TBS cornstarch
4 TBS cold water

Boil vinegar, onion, apricots, curry powder, salt, sugar, and water for 3 minutes.
Cool and pour over meat in a deep covered container. Sprinkle with pepper. Add extra water if meat is not covered completely. Marinate refrigerated for 1 day at least.
Remove meat and drain.
Skewer meat and salt pork alternately on 12 skewers.
Grill over red-hot coals (or under hot grill) until meat is done.
Meanwhile bring the marinade to a boil.
Stir in cornstarch blended with water; cook until marinade thickens into a sauce.
Serve *sosaties* with sauce and yellow rice.

Cape Malay Pickled Fish (Ingelegde Vis)

The Cape Malays are the descendants of Malay slaves and contract workers brought to work in the Cape Province during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They still maintain much of their traditional culture, blended with African, Indian, and European influences. This dish is served as an appetizer or main dish for a light meal.

1 pound *snoek* (or substitute bonito, tuna, or jack), cleaned, scaled, and filleted, skin left on
coarse salt, as needed
oil, as needed, for frying
3 cloves garlic, chopped roughly
1 large onion, peeled and sliced into rings
½ cup vinegar
¼ cup water
¼ cup brown sugar
4 peppercorns
2 cloves
2 allspice berries
1 bay leaf
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp turmeric powder

Sprinkle coarse salt on both sides of the fish fillet and let stand in a glass bowl for 20 to 25 minutes.
Rinse fish thoroughly under running water. Pat dry with paper towels.
Cut fish into serving portions leaving the skin attached.
Heat oil in a frying pan; fry fish on both sides, skin side first, until cooked through.
Place remaining ingredients in a large pot; bring to a boil, stirring until sugar dissolves.
Simmer approximately for 10 minutes until onions are cooked but still firm.
Place a layer of fish in a glass serving dish. Ladle a generous helping of the marinade on the fish to cover. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Repeat with another layer of fish and more marinade and salt making sure each layer of fish is covered by marinade, until all ingredients are used up.
Cool to room temperature, then refrigerate 2 hours before serving.
Serve cold with rice.

Koeksisters

This dessert originates from the Boer settlers.

Syrup (to be made the night before)

1 cup sugar
2 cups water
1 tsp cream of tartar
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp grated orange rind

Bring sugar, water, and cream of tartar to a boil.
Simmer to a light syrup, for 5–8 minutes.
Let cool to room temperature.
Add vanilla and rind. Refrigerate, covered, overnight.

(*continued*)

Batter

1 egg, beaten
2 cups flour
6 TBS milk
6 TBS butter
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
oil for deep-frying

Process all ingredients except oil in a food processor just until the mixture comes together into a ball.
Remove dough and refrigerate, covered, for at least 1 hour.
Roll out dough to a rectangle about ½-inch thick.
Cut into strips measuring 4 inches long × 1 inch wide.
Make two equally spaced cuts lengthwise along each strip, but not to the end, so as to get 3 pieces attached to each strip of dough.
Braid the 3 pieces, pressing the cut ends together firmly.
Heat oil in a deep pan.
Deep-fry the *koeksisters* in oil until golden.
Drain on paper towels.
Take half the syrup out of the refrigerator, leaving the remainder to keep cold.
Dip hot *koeksisters* into cold syrup for a few seconds.
The syrup will gradually warm up, so when it does, return one batch of syrup to refrigerator and use the other.
Serve as dessert, or with tea.

SPAIN

Settled by Celts, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Visigoths, and Berbers from North Africa until Spanish reconquest of the region in 1491, Spain had a vast empire from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries, with colonies spread throughout the globe. With five mountain ranges and some desert-like areas, the landscape is varied. The climate too varies—from temperate in the north through desert in the center to subtropical in the south—and with 30 percent of the land being arable, grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock are raised. The population comprises a mix of Mediterraneans and northern Europeans, with a small minority from North Africa and former Spanish colonies.

Spanish cuisine is sophisticated and robust, greatly influenced by Moorish (North African) traditions and enriched by the fruits and vegetables introduced from its South American colonies. Without these foods from the New World—potato, tomato, bell pepper, eggplant, pumpkin, corn, among many others—French, Italian, Irish, African, North American, and in fact every country's cuisine would look completely different.

Spanish cooking varies according to each region's ecology and history. In the south, Andalusian cuisine is most strongly influenced by Moorish elements. The northwest (Navarra, Aragon, Murcia) is the least influenced by Moorish cooking. The north is Basque country (see entry "The Basques"), with its own rich cooking tradition, fostered by gastronomic societies. Catalan cooking in the northeast is influenced by southern France and Italy.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potato, rice, bread.
- Wheat, barley, corn.
- Fish (of all kinds, fresh and dried), seafood (of all kinds), pork, beef, chicken and other poultry, eggs, dairy products (many types of cheese from cow's, sheep's, goat's milk), sausages, entrails (tripe, various internal organs).
- Eggplant, zucchini, spinach, cabbage, caper, pickled olives, chickpeas and other legumes, asparagus, artichoke, cardoon, mushrooms.
- Grape, citrus (orange, lemon, lime), apple, apricot, pear, peach, nectarine, melon, watermelon, cherimoya, mango, loquat, strawberries, almond, pine nut, other nuts.

- Seasonings: garlic, onion, tomato, olive oil, smoked paprika (*pimenton*), bay leaf, saffron (Spain is a major producer), cinnamon, vanilla, pepper, oregano, thyme, other herbs.

Typical Dishes

- Soups and stews of meat and vegetables: variously called *puchero*, *olla*, *cazuela*, *escudela*, depending on region.
- Rice dishes: rice with seafood, chicken, sausages, and vegetables (*paella*), rice with squid cooked in its ink (*arroz negro*).
- Moorish-influenced dishes of meat and vegetables cooked with fruit and nuts: chicken with prunes, almonds, and pinenuts; pork with prunes and orange juice.
- Catalan dishes: combined "sea and mountain" (*mar i muntanya*) cooking, that is, meat or chicken cooked with fish or seafood; ground almond and hazelnut dressing for a fish salad (*xatonada*).
- Andalucian dishes: cold soup (*gazpacho*); fried, lightly battered fish (*pescaito*); fish baked in salt.
- Basque dishes: dried cod in spicy sauce (*bacalao en pil pil*), stuffed spider crab, roast stuffed bell peppers.
- Castilla (includes Madrid) dishes: roast pig; roast lamb; roast vegetables; stew of vegetables, chickpeas, and meat (*cocido*).
- Bean dishes: ham and bean stew (*fabada asturiana*), chickpeas and tripe stew (*callos con garbanzos*).
- Rich sweets of nuts, eggs, and milk: *yemas* (egg yolks and milk); *crema catalana* (crème caramel).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Place settings are European.

SAFFRON

- Regional culinary associations have branches throughout major cities, where a full meal (three or more courses) of typical regional dishes is served at midday.
- Breakfast: usually light, with coffee, bread with jam or butter, cheese or sausage.
- Lunch: main meal, of three to four courses, eaten between 12 and 2, with lunch break of 2 hours. Most go home to eat and only return to work from 4 p.m. Bean or other soup or appetizer of sliced sausage/ham; main dish of fish, meat, or chicken (*arroz negro*); salad or other vegetable dish (*escalivada*); dessert (*crema catalana*); white or red wine (children get water mixed with wine); coffee.
- Evening meal: eaten very late, not earlier than 9 or 10 p.m. Usually, *tapas*—small servings of cooked vegetables, meat, beans, fish, and other foods—washed down with wine or beer; pasta or rice-based dish.
- Snacks: mid-morning, mid-afternoon, and early evening. Families may go out around 4 p.m. for *merienda* (snack) of

churros (fritters) dipped in thick chocolate; open-faced sandwiches of crusty bread and Serrano ham or sausage or cheese; Catalonian bread rubbed with olive oil and very ripe tomato (*pa amb tomàquet*).
- Drinks: fruit juices, wine, sherry, beer, *horchata* (see recipe given), *cava* (sparkling wine).

Eggplant, Potato, and Pepper Casserole (Tumbet)

This is a popular dish from Mallorca in the Balearic Islands using local vegetables. Eat this with crusty bread as a light lunch, or as an accompaniment to a main dish.

1 cup olive oil
4 potatoes (1 pound total weight), sliced crosswise, ¼-inch thick
1 large eggplant (1 pound), sliced crosswise, ½-inch thick
4 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and quartered
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound ripe tomatoes, peeled and chopped, or canned
salt, freshly ground black pepper
2 TBS extra-virgin olive oil

In a wide skillet, heat oil over low-medium heat.
Slowly fry potatoes until tender and crisp at the edges, for about 20 minutes.
Drain on paper towels; sprinkle with salt and pepper; keep warm in a 9 × 13-inch baking dish in a low oven.
Increase heat to medium. Fry eggplant on both sides, for about 15 minutes.
Drain on paper towels, place over potatoes, and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Fry peppers until tender, for about 5–10 minutes.
Drain on paper towels, then add in a layer over the eggplant, and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Drain off most of the frying oil, leaving just 3 tablespoons.
Fry garlic until pale gold; add tomatoes.
Simmer for 30 minutes until thickened.
Pour the tomato sauce over the fried vegetables in the baking dish.
Drizzle with 2 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil.
Increase oven to 350°F; bake for 20 minutes, or until piping hot.
Serve immediately.

Galician Vegetable and Sausage Stew (Caldo Gallego)

Galicia (or Galiza, as preferred) in northwest Spain was only briefly occupied by the Moors, but rapidly reconquered, hence it has a unique culture, language (more closely related to Portuguese than modern Spanish), and cuisine of its own, primarily based on fish and shellfish from the coast. The other typical Galician dish is *empanada*, savory pies filled with meat or fish, brought to South

America by Galician immigrants (the Spanish who settled in certain areas of South America were all called "Gallegos").

This soup uses a Galician vegetable called *grelos*, commonly translated into English as "turnip tops" (*Brassica campestris*) but not really similar to standard turnip leaves. Substitute kale, cabbage, or spinach. Serve this robust soup with crusty bread as a first course or light lunch.

2 TBS olive oil
½ cup onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
4 cups bouillon (or 2 cubes bouillon dissolved in equivalent water)
1 cup potato, peeled and diced
1 cup fresh tomatoes, peeled and chopped (or canned)
½ cup carrot, peeled and diced
1 bay leaf
1 cup hard sausage (*chorizo*), sliced (available from Hispanic stores)
½ cup drained canned chickpeas (*garbanzos*)
1 cup cooked chopped kale (substitute cabbage, or frozen chopped spinach, defrosted)
1 TBS parsley, minced
½ tsp fresh oregano leaves
¼ tsp pepper

Heat oil over medium heat until hot.
Sauté onion and garlic until onion is translucent; add stock and bring to a boil.
Stir in potato, tomatoes, carrot, and bay leaf; cover and simmer until vegetables are tender.
Add remaining ingredients; cook until kale is tender, for about 10 minutes.
Remove from heat; discard bay leaf.
Season to taste.
Serve immediately.

Fisherman's Rice (Arrosejat)

This simple rice dish is from the fishing town of Calafell, just south of Barcelona on Spain's northeast coast. This is usually made with whatever fish is caught, and best eaten for midday with a garlic sauce called *alioli*.

4 TBS olive oil
5 cloves garlic
2 TBS smoked paprika
1 slice of white bread, diced
5 potatoes, cut into french fry–size strips (about 3 × ½ inches)
1 pound fish fillet, sliced into 3-inch pieces
2½ cups fish stock
salt
½ cup rice or fine vermicelli, snapped into 1-inch lengths
1 small onion, chopped fine

In a heavy saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil; fry garlic and paprika until garlic is pale gold.

Stir in diced bread; fry until lightly crisped. Turn off heat.
Transfer garlic and bread mixture to a blender or food processor.
Add 1 cup broth; blend until smooth. Set aside.
Return the saucepan to fire; add the garlic-bread mixture and potatoes.
Cover and simmer until the potatoes are tender, for about 20–25 minutes. (Add a bit more stock if necessary.)
Ten minutes before the potatoes are ready, add fish, sprinkled with a little salt. Set aside when done.
In another heavy saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat.
Stir in rice or vermicelli and onion, frying until golden.
Stir in 1¼ cups fish broth (the amount needed may be more or less, depending on the rice).
Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to lowest possible, and simmer until rice or vermicelli is done, for about 15 minutes. (Add more broth if necessary.)
On individual plates, spoon next to each other a portion each of potatoes, fish, and rice.
Serve immediately.

Meat Stew with Capers (Picadillo con Alcaparras)

This stew is served with rice for a main meal, accompanied by a salad or preceded by a soup.

2 TBS olive oil
1½ pounds ground beef (substitute pork, chicken, or turkey)
1 onion, chopped fine
1 ripe tomato, peeled and seeded, then chopped fine
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into thin strips
1 garlic clove, minced
1 bay leaf
1 tsp oregano
¼ cup capers, drained
12 green olives, pitted, sliced into rings
1 TBS wine vinegar
2 TBS tomato paste
¼ cup water or stock
½ tsp brown sugar
⅛ tsp nutmeg
salt to taste
chili sauce (Tabasco or similar) to taste

In a heavy saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat; brown meat thoroughly.
Stir in onion, tomato, green pepper, garlic, bay leaf, oregano, and capers; cover and cook until onion is softened, for about 10 minutes.
Stir in olives, vinegar, tomato paste, water, sugar, nutmeg, salt, and 2–3 drops chili sauce.
Cover and simmer for 30–40 minutes until most of the liquid is absorbed.
Serve hot.

Potatoes with Tomato-Chilli Sauce (Patatas Bravas)

This is often served with other small savory dishes (*tapas*), such as slices of dry sausage, sheep's cheese, air-dried Serrano ham, or garlic-fried clams, to eat with wine, sherry, or other drinks as an early evening or late afternoon snack before or instead of dinner.

3 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 dried chili pepper, crumbled
1 tomato, peeled and chopped
2 TBS Spanish (smoked) paprika (*pimenton*)
2 TBS flour
1 cup chicken stock (or 1 cube chicken bouillon dissolved in 1 cup hot water)
salt and pepper to taste
¾ cup olive oil
1½ pounds potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes

In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; stir in onion and fry until translucent.
Stir in garlic and fry for 1 minute.
Stir in chilli, tomato, and paprika; cook for 5 minutes.
Stir in the flour, then add stock a spoonful at a time, stirring well after each addition.
Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer uncovered until mixture is reduced to 2 cups, for about 10 minutes.
Take off heat; cool slightly, then transfer to a food processor and puree until smooth.
Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
In a deep, heavy frying pan over medium heat, heat ¾ cup oil.
Fry potatoes until golden brown, stirring occasionally, for about 20–25 minutes.
Drain on paper towels.
Bring tomato sauce to a simmer; ladle over potatoes.
Serve on their own, as part of appetizers (*tapas*), or with a meat dish for lunch or dinner.

Chargrilled Vegetables (Escalivada)

This is a Catalonian dish to be eaten on its own, or as an accompaniment to fish, pasta, rice, or poultry. The name *escalivada* means "roasted or grilled over embers" in the Catalonian language. The essence of this dish lies in the quality and freshness of the vegetables: it is intended to be prepared and eaten the same day.

2 medium eggplants
2 red bell peppers
2 green bell peppers
2 tomatoes

2 medium zucchini
1 TBS parsley, chopped
¼ cup olive oil
2 TBS vinegar
1 garlic clove, minced fine
salt and pepper to taste

Pierce eggplants a few times with a fork.
Grill (over charcoal or under a broiler) eggplants and peppers, turning from time to time to blister and char the skin (about 20 minutes).
Remove from heat; set aside to cool.
Peel the eggplants. Tear the flesh into long strips.
Peel the papery skin off the peppers; discard core and seeds. Tear flesh into strips.
Score the top of the tomatoes with a cross. Grill tomatoes and zucchini for 5 minutes, turning occasionally, until charred. Place to bake in a preheated 375°F oven until softened, about 30–40 minutes. Allow to cool, then peel tomatoes and quarter. Leave the zucchini unpeeled; slice in half crosswise, then cut into quarters.
Arrange vegetables on a platter around the tomatoes.
Mix parsley, oil, vinegar, and garlic; season with salt and pepper.
Drizzle over vegetables.
Serve while warm as a side dish or with other *tapas*.

Tiger Nut Drink (Horchata de Chufa)

Chufa (tiger nuts: tubers of the yellow nut sedge, *Cyperus esculentus L.*) are tiny tuberous roots originally from Egypt and known in antiquity. Brought by the Arabs to Spain, they have been popular since. They taste somewhat like almonds. In the United States they grow as a weed. *Horchata* is a very popular and refreshing summer drink in the region of Valencia in northeast Spain.

3 cups *chufa* (or substitute raw, unsalted almonds)
1 cup cinnamon-flavored light syrup (½ cup sugar dissolved in 1 cup boiling water, mixed with ½ tsp cinnamon, cooled)

Clean *chufa* thoroughly and soak in plenty of cold water overnight.
Rinse in clean water, repeating until water is completely clear; drain.
In a food processor, blend *chufa* with 2 cups water until smooth.
Transfer to a covered container and add 1 cup water.
Strain through a fine sieve or cheesecloth.
Squeeze remaining solids to extract all liquid.
Stir in syrup.
Refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight.
Serve cold.

Pork with Prunes and Orange Juice (Llom amb Prunes i Suc de Taronja)

This is a popular family dinner dish in Catalonia. Serve with a salad and bread to sop up the juices. You may prefer to use pitted prunes, but the original recipe calls for whole ones so that diners can hold the pits in their fingers to savor the last bits of prune.

4 prunes with pits
½ cup water
2 TBS olive oil
1½ large onions, sliced into crescents
1½ pounds boneless pork, sliced into ½-inch-thick steaks
2 cups fresh orange juice with pulp
1 TBS cornstarch
salt and pepper to taste

Simmer prunes in water for 2 minutes to soften. (Or microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts). Set aside.
In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; fry onions until softened.
Sprinkle cornstarch over onions; mix well.
Place pork over onions, turning when they change color.
Stir in orange juice, prunes, salt, and pepper.
Leave to simmer for 5 minutes until sauce thickens.
Do not cook beyond this as the pork will toughen.
Serve immediately.

Lentil Salad (Amanida de Llenties)

This is a northern Spanish dish that uses up various bits of vegetables, so use any other vegetables to substitute for those given. This salad is usually eaten on its own for a light meal. It can be eaten chilled or at room temperature.

1 cup brown lentils, soaked overnight in cold water and drained
1 tsp salt
2 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped fine
2 strips smoked bacon, diced
3 TBS extra-virgin olive oil
3 TBS vinegar
salt and pepper to taste
4 tomatoes, cubed
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
1 cup cooked sweet corn kernels
½ cup cooked green or white asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces
8 large lettuce leaves
2 eggs, hard-boiled, quartered

Bring lentils to a boil with salt in 3 cups water.
Simmer for 10–15 minutes, or just until tender but not mushy. They must keep their shape. Set aside.

Heat oil and fry onion until softened; stir in bacon, and cook for 3–5 minutes until done.
Turn off heat and set aside.
Mix the extra-virgin olive oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper for salad dressing.
Place lentils, onion, and bacon, and all vegetables, except for lettuce, in a large salad bowl.
Pour dressing over salad; mix thoroughly but gently.
Put 2 leaves of lettuce in each salad plate. Add 2 egg quarters.
Spoon salad on the leaves.
Serve.

Potato Loaf (Braç de Puré)

This is a Catalonian potato salad with an interesting presentation. Mashed potatoes form the "crust" for filling vegetables, which are bound with mayonnaise. All are then rolled together to form a loaf. After chilling, the loaf is cut crosswise, each slice revealing the colorful filling. Serve this as a first course before a grilled or roast meat main dish, or as a light lunch.

1 can tuna fish in oil
3 eggs, hard-boiled, chopped
1 cup green olives, pitted, sliced
1 fresh red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced (or canned roasted pepper in oil, diced)
¼ cup mayonnaise
salt, pepper, prepared mustard to taste
4 cups mashed potato
plastic wrap (kitchen cling film)
clean, dry kitchen towel
additional mayonnaise for coating
olives, quartered eggs, red pepper strips, and lettuce leaves for garnish

In a bowl, mix tuna, eggs, olives, and red pepper with mayonnaise. (Add a bit more mayonnaise if insufficient to bind mixture.)
Season with salt, pepper, and mustard.
Place a towel on a flat surface.
Lay a large sheet, about 12×20 inches, of plastic wrap on the towel.
On the plastic wrap, spread the mashed potatoes in an even rectangle about 1-inch thick.
Leave a margin of 2 inches to the edge of the plastic wrap.
Place the mayonnaise-vegetable mixture to run along the middle of the rectangle.
With the aid of the towel, roll the mashed potato to cover the filling completely.
Shape the roll evenly.
Refrigerate for at least an hour.
Uncover the loaf on a bed of lettuce set on a serving tray.
Coat with a light layer of mayonnaise (you may wish to draw patterns on it).
Decorate loaf with olives, egg slices, and red pepper strips.
Cut crosswise into slices.

Fritters with Chocolate (Churros con Chocolate)

At 4 p.m., after siesta, families in most Spanish towns will go out to a local cafe and order *churros con chocolate* for *merienda* (snack). The crisp fritters are dipped into a bowl of thick, hot chocolate.

Churros

1 cup water
½ cup butter
¼ tsp salt
1 cup flour
3 eggs, well beaten
vegetable oil for deep-frying
confectioners' sugar for sprinkling

Bring water, butter, and salt to a rolling boil in a pot.
Stir in flour; reduce heat.
Stir vigorously until mixture forms a ball (about 1 minute); remove from heat.
Thoroughly beat in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. (Use an electric mixer, if desired).
Spoon mixture into a cake decorators' tube with a large star tip.
Heat 2 inches of oil in a pan to 360°F.
Squeeze 4-inch strips of dough into the hot oil.
Fry 3 or 4 at a time until golden brown, about 2 minutes on each side, turning once. Drain on paper towels.
Place in a napkin-lined basket or tray.
Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

Chocolate for Dunking

4 ounces dark chocolate, chopped
2 cups milk
4 TBS sugar
1 TBS cornstarch
1 tsp cinnamon

In a saucepan, blend chocolate, half the milk, and sugar over low heat, stirring, until chocolate melts.
Dissolve cornstarch in the remaining milk; whisk into chocolate mixture.
Simmer, whisking constantly, until chocolate is thickened (about 5 minutes; add 1 teaspoon more cornstarch dissolved in 2 tablespoons milk, if not thickened by then).
Remove from heat; whisk smooth.
Pour into small warmed cups.
Sprinkle cinnamon over chocolate, if desired.
Serve hot with fresh, hot *churros*.
Dip *churro* into chocolate before each bite; sip chocolate when *churros* are all finished.

Baked Apples (Pomes al Forn)

This is traditionally served with Christmas dinner in Catalonia.

4 apples, Golden Delicious or other eating apple
8 TBS sugar
4 tsp cognac (substitute vanilla or 4 cinnamon sticks, each 1 inch long)

Core the apples from the stem end, but leave unpeeled.
Prick through the cavity into the flesh in several places, without piercing through the peel.
Place 2 tablespoons sugar in each cavity. (Place cinnamon stick, if using.)
Place on a baking tray, and bake in preheated 350°F oven for about 20–30 minutes; or before they collapse.
The apples will be tender, and the syrup still liquid.
Just before taking them out of the oven, place a few drops of cognac or vanilla in each cavity.
Serve warm or cold.

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MICHAEL ASHKENAZI

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Illustrations by Jeanne Jacob and Maayan Ashkenazi.

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SRI LANKA

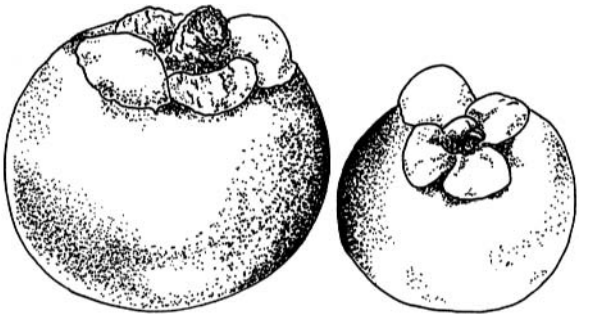
Sri Lanka, an island nation south of India, was a Portuguese, a Dutch, and then a British colony until independence in 1948. Although the coasts are tropical, most of Sri Lanka is hilly or mountainous with thick forests, ideal for growing tea, its major export. Most Sri Lankans are Sinhalese and Tamils (migrants from India brought to work the colonial tea plantations). Sri Lankan cooking is spicy and hot, with Portuguese, Dutch, Indian, and Malay influences.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, vegetables, curry spices.
- Chicken, beef, marine fish (tuna, bonito), fresh-water fish (tilapia), seafood (crab, shrimps, squid).
- Eggplant, bitter melon, various gourds, pumpkin, cucumber, cabbage, beans.
- Bananas (of many colors and types, called "plantain" locally), pineapple, mango, durian, papaya, passion fruit, exotic tropical fruit (*mangosteen*, *rambutan*).
- Seasonings: over forty spices; herbs (curry leaf, *pandanus* leaf); Maldive fish (*umbalakade*, processed bonito similar to Japan's *katsuobushi*), pounded or ground for flavoring and thickening curries and relishes.

Typical Dishes

- Curries of vegetables, fish, chicken or other meat, distinguished by color: white (with coconut milk), red (with fiery chilies), black or dark brown (with roasted curry powder).
- Dutch-influenced meatballs (*frikkadel*), steamed rice and meat wrapped in banana leaf (*lamprais*).
- Malay-influenced dishes: savory steamed rice and coconut rolls (*pittu*), coconut custard (*wattalappam*).
- Indian-influenced dishes: flat bread (*roti*), hoppers (*appas*: rice-flour pancakes).
- Drinks: king coconut (*thambili*) and young coconut (*kurumba*) juice; woodapple (a local hard-shelled fruit) and other fresh fruit juices; fruit cordials; bottled carbonated drinks, nonalcoholic ginger beer; tea with sugar and milk, coffee; local and imported beer; locally brewed palm toddy and liquor (*arrack*).



MANGOSTEEN

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- All items brought to the table at the same time in serving dishes. Diner puts rice on an individual plate, and chooses items from side dishes to surround the rice. With the fingers of the right hand, rice is mixed with other items on the plate, formed into a bite-sized ball, and brought to the mouth.
- Breakfast: rice, curried vegetables, egg hopper (pancake with egg in the middle), string hopper (steamed "noodle" cake), tea, coffee.
- Lunch: rice, curried vegetables, fresh fruit or sweet.
- Dinner: rice; fish, beef, or chicken curry; two kinds of vegetables; fried crispy *papadam* (lentil-based thin fritter); salad of green herbs and coconut (*mallum* or *mallung*); hot relish (*sambol*); fresh fruit or sweet.
- Snacks are called "short eats" and are usually bought from street stalls: Chinese rolls (fried pancakes with meat, fish, or vegetable filling), fish cutlets, pastries, hot dogs, hamburgers, shredded flat bread stir-fried with egg, meat, and vegetables (*kottu roti*).
- Sweets: buffalo yogurt and treacle (*kiri pana*), confections made of treacle and/or coconut milk and cashew nuts (*kevum*, *kalu dodol*).

Coconut Sambol (Pol Sambol)

Coconut *sambol* is a typical hot relish eaten throughout the country, usually made at home, in snack stalls, and even in elegant restaurants. This relish is served with most meals. Without the coconut and garlic, this relish is called *lunu miris* and is served with string hoppers or curry for breakfast.

1 cup dessicated coconut, soaked in ¼ cup hot water for 10 minutes
juice of 1 small lemon or lime
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup ground Maldive fish (or substitute Japanese *katsuobushi* flakes or powder)
a pinch of pepper
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp chili powder (or to taste)

In a blender or food processor, blend all the ingredients.
Adjust seasoning as desired.
Serve in a bowl.

Milk Rice (Kiribath)

This delicacy is served with bananas for breakfast or at teatime and is drunk with milk tea or plain tea (tea without milk, but with sugar and sometimes a slice of crushed fresh ginger).

2 cups brown sugar
½ cup water
4 cups dessicated coconut
¼ tsp ground cloves
a pinch of salt

2 cups short-grain white rice
3 cups water
2 cups coconut milk
2 tsp salt

Prepare coconut treacle mix: put brown sugar and water into a pan; bring to a boil.
Add coconut, mix well, and turn off heat.
Mix in cloves and salt. Set aside.
Put rice and water into a pan and bring to a boil.
Cover, lower heat, and simmer for 15 minutes.
Stir in coconut milk and salt.
Simmer for 10–15 minutes more, until cream has been absorbed.
Let cool slightly but not completely. Once rice is cold, it will be too sticky to handle.
In an 8×8-inch baking dish, spread half the rice evenly (at least ½-inch thick).
Spread coconut treacle mix over the rice.
Cover with remaining rice.
Cut into 2-inch blocks.
Serve warm or cold.

Cutlets (Cutlus)

These English-influenced cutlets are a popular snack or side dish for lunch or dinner. Serve with rice, a vegetable curry, and a hot relish.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 small onion, chopped
½ inch fresh ginger, grated
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 green chili, seeded, chopped
1 sprig curry leaves (optional)
1 piece pandanus leaf (optional, or a few drops pandanus flavoring)
1 1-inch cinnamon stick
2 cans flaked light tuna, drained
salt, pepper to taste
¼ tsp cardamom powder
4 medium potatoes, boiled, peeled, and diced
oil for deep-frying

Coating

2 eggs, beaten
toasted bread crumbs, ground

Heat oil over medium heat in a frying pan; stir in onion and fry until lightly browned.
Add ginger, garlic, chili, curry leaves, pandanus leaf (if using pandanus flavoring, add at a later stage), and cinnamon; fry for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in tuna, salt, pepper, and cardamom powder.

(*continued*)

Turn off heat; discard cinnamon stick (add pandanus flavoring if using).
Mix in potatoes. Let cool.
Shape into 4 thick oval cutlets.
Dip cutlets into egg; then into bread crumbs.
Deep-fry in hot oil until light brown.
Serve hot.

Egg Curry

This curry is usually accompanied by rice and a hot relish for breakfast or a light lunch.

oil for deep-frying
4 hard-boiled eggs, shelled, left whole
1 small onion, sliced
1 small green chili, cored, seeded, and sliced (optional)
1 medium fresh tomato, chopped (or ½ cup canned tomatoes)
1 tsp curry powder
¼ tsp turmeric powder
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 2-inch stick cinnamon
1 tsp paprika
4 curry leaves and 4 pandanus leaves (leaves available frozen from Asian stores; or substitute 2 drops pandanus flavoring)
salt to taste
½ cup coconut milk

Heat oil over medium heat; deep-fry eggs till light brown.
Drain eggs.
In a saucepan, place all other ingredients except coconut milk.
Add water to cover the contents halfway.
Bring to a simmer for 3 minutes; add eggs.
Simmer for 5 minutes more.
Add coconut milk; simmer for 2 minutes.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot or cold.

Coconut Custard (Wattalappam)

Together with buffalo curds and treacle (*kiri pani*), this is a commonly eaten dessert. *Wattalappam* is said to be of Malay origin. Instead of dried raisins and cashews, slices of fresh tropical fruit such as mango or papaya can be used.

2 cups coconut milk
6 eggs
⅔ cup brown sugar, packed
a pinch of powdered cardamom or cloves
¼ cup raisins, washed and drained
¼ cup cashews, chopped

In a blender or food processor blend till smooth the coconut milk, eggs, brown sugar, and cardamom.
Pour into a buttered 8×8-inch baking dish or into 4 custard cups.
Set baking dish into a baking tray half-filled with hot water.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 35–40 minutes for the large dish, 20–25 minutes for the cups.
When cool, sprinkle with raisins and cashews.

Yogurt and Treacle (Kiri Pani)

This traditional dessert is common in rural areas where the ingredients are easily available.

8 ounces jaggery sugar, grated (palm sugar available from Indian stores; or brown sugar)
½ cup water
1 pint yogurt (best from buffalo milk, but substitute good Greek sheep's or goat's yogurt), drained for ½ hour

Slowly bring jaggery and water to a boil until jaggery is dissolved.
Reduce, stirring, to a thick syrup.
Let cool.
Pour syrup over yogurt before serving.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

St. Vincent and the Grenadines are thirty-two Caribbean islands and cays, formerly a French colony, but captured by Britain in 1783. Although independent since 1979, the country remains part of the British Commonwealth. The islands' tropical climate and mountainous terrain, mostly volcanic, are ideal for spices and tropical crops, foremost of which is arrowroot. Arrowroot starch thickens sauces, and most of the world's supply is grown here. A few cattle, sheep, pigs, and goats are raised.

St. Vincentians claim descent from Afro-Caribbeans, British and other Europeans, East Indians and Carib Amerindians, and their cuisine reflects this multiethnic culture.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, pigeon pea, plantain.
- Fish (*tri-tri*, similar to whitebait), shellfish (especially conch), chicken, lamb, goat, pork, preserved meats and fish (bacon, salt cod, salted mackerel).
- Bananas, various taro tubers (*eddo*, *tannia*, *dasheen*), breadfruit, squash, pumpkin, christophene.
- Seasonings: thyme (3 types—regular, small leaf, and broad leaf), chives, curry powder, turmeric, hot pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon.

Typical Dishes

- Peas and rice: the national dish, using green pigeon peas, ground provisions (root vegetables), and leafy greens, with or without coconut milk.
- Curried goat or lamb.
- Conch souse—the meat marinated in lime juice, onions, and herbs.
- Fried plantains, boiled christophene.
- Sweets: cakes and pies with breadfruit, coconut, sweet potato, cinnamon, nutmeg; guava and other native fruit jellies.
- Drinks: sorrel (juice from hibiscus flowers), ginger beer, bush tea (from local herbs).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: bakes (actually panfried bread) with butter, fried fresh fish, boiled plantain, coffee, or bush tea.
- Lunch: heaviest meal, usually with three courses—soup or appetizer, meat or fish, and sweet.
- Supper: light meal of bakes with soup or vegetable dish.
- Snacks, eaten at mid-morning or mid-afternoon: sweet pastries or savory fritters with sorrel tea or other drink.

Stuffed Cucumbers

Cucumbers are prepared in various ways, both raw and cooked. This dish makes an attractive and tasty first course for a heavy meal or a main course for a light one, especially on hot days.

1 cucumber
1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
½ cup smoked ham, diced
½ tsp grated onion
¼ cup mayonnaise
salt, pepper to taste
3–5 chives, chopped

Trim the cucumber, cut in half lengthwise, and scrape off core and seeds. Set aside.
In a bowl, blend well the ham, egg, onion, mayonnaise, salt, and pepper.
Stuff cucumber slices with ham mixture. Put slices back together into a "whole" cucumber.
Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and chill.
To serve, slice crosswise and garnish with chives.

Pea Soup

Pigeon peas tolerate hot and humid growing conditions better than the regular green pea, thus their popularity in the Caribbean. The original recipe calls for fresh green pigeon peas (softer than the dried), which may not be easily available, and frozen green peas can be used as substitute. This substantial soup is a meal on its own, usually served for lunch or supper, with or without dumplings.

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
3 stalks fresh thyme, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and chopped
1 pound stewing beef or boneless pork, cubed
1 cup pumpkin, diced
2 cups shelled green pigeon peas (or substitute frozen green peas, thawed)

(*continued*)

6 cups water
1 cup tannia, taro, or potatoes, peeled and diced
1 green plantain, diced (optional)
salt, pepper to taste
dumplings (see the next recipe)
1 TBS butter
fresh thyme and chives for garnish

In a covered saucepan, heat oil; stir in the onion, celery, thyme, and carrot, cooking until softened.
Add meat and pumpkin, cooking until the meat is browned.
Stir in pigeon peas. (If you use green peas, add them later.)
Add water, tannia, plantain, salt, and pepper; cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; let simmer for 25–30 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Meanwhile prepare the dumplings.
During the last 10 minutes of cooking, add dumplings and butter.
Taste, adding more seasoning if needed.
If using green peas, add them five minutes before the end of cooking.
Serve garnished with chopped thyme and chives.

Dumplings

Dumplings are made all over the Caribbean, but with many variations. The dumplings, if fried, are called "bakes," and St. Vincentian dumplings differ by having a bit of cinnamon or nutmeg.

1 cup flour
¼ cup cornmeal
1 TBS sugar
½ tsp salt
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp cinnamon or nutmeg
⅓ cup (or more) water

In a bowl, combine all ingredients to make a fairly stiff dough.
Shape into balls, logs, or oval bite-sized portions.
Drop into boiling soup and allow to simmer for 10 minutes.
Alternatively, fry in hot oil until golden brown.

Codfish Cakes

Salting, drying, and smoking fish and meat were traditional ways of preserving these foods. Despite refrigeration and better transportation, these food items are still valued for their intrinsic flavor and texture.

½ pound salt cod
1 onion, minced
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
5 chives, chopped
2 sprigs fresh marjoram, chopped
3 sprigs fresh thyme, chopped

½ tsp black pepper (or hot pepper sauce)
½ cup flour
1 large egg, beaten
¼ cup milk
oil for frying

Soak fish in a bowl of water overnight, refrigerated.
Drain, remove skin and bones, and mince or shred flesh.
Stir in onion, bell pepper, chives, marjoram, thyme, black pepper, flour, egg, and milk to a soft dropping consistency. Add more milk if necessary.
In a skillet over medium heat, heat some oil for shallow-frying.
Drop the mixture by spoonfuls into hot oil and brown on both sides.
Drain on paper towels. Serve hot.
Note: A stiffer mixture can be rolled between floured hands into small balls and deep-fried.

Honey-Baked Plantain Rolls

These are popular as snacks. Made with tiny sausages inside each roll, they make excellent appetizers.

4 ripe but firm plantains (or 4 semi-ripe bananas)
2 TBS margarine or butter
juice from 1 lime or ½ lemon
¼ cup honey

Heat oven to 325°F.
In a covered saucepan, boil plantains or bananas in their skins for 10 minutes.
Peel and cut into lengthwise strips (about 5 strips to each plantain, 4 to a banana).
Roll each strip up and fasten with a toothpick.
Fit all into a buttered 12×8-inch baking dish.
Make lime-honey glaze: in an 800-watt microwave, melt margarine for 30 seconds.
Stir in lime juice and honey.
Brush glaze generously over rolls.
Bake for 10 minutes in a preheated 325°F oven. Brush again with remaining glaze.
Bake for 10–15 minutes more, or until golden brown.
Serve hot.

SUDAN

The largest country in Africa and the tenth largest in the world, Sudan was ruled jointly by Egypt and the United Kingdom until independence in 1956. There had been repeated civil wars between the Muslim north and the non-Muslim south even before independence.

The terrain is flat desert in the north and forested scrubland in the south, with a tropical climate. Cultivation of staples and fruit is possible in the fertile south and west; rice is grown in the north with water from the Nile River (which runs through the country), which is additionally a source of fish. The population comprises many ethnic groups. Sudanese cooking is heavily influenced by Egyptian, nomad Arab, and African elements. Northern Sudanese food closely resembles neighboring Egypt's, being rich, robust, and spicy. The center and the west are mainly populated by Dinka, Nuer, Masalit, and other cattle nomads, whose food is cattle and dairy based. The south and southwest are populated by farmers, whose staples are sorghum and cassava, usually eaten as a stiff porridge (*ugali*).

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice (north), cassava, millet, and sorghum (rest of the country).
- Lamb, chicken, fish (from Nile, fresh, salted, smoked), wild game, beef; milk, yogurt, white feta-like cheese (*jibna*); eggs.
- Pumpkin and other gourds, beans and other legumes, cucumber, tomato, green vegetables (spinach, cabbage, wild greens), okra, eggplant.
- Banana, mango, papaya, pineapple, orange and other citrus fruits.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, chili pepper, lemon, black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, turmeric.

Typical Dishes

- Staples: flat breads (*khubz*, *kisra*, *goraasa*, *injera*), thick porridge (millet, sorghum, cornmeal).
- Mashed bean dishes: paste (*fuul medames*); fritters (*tamiya*, in the north).
- Grilled or fried lamb meatballs, beef.
- Stews of vegetables (okra, beans, wild greens) with or without peanuts: *nyaba* (most common in the south). Stews of meat or chicken and vegetables: beef

and potato stew (*dama be potaatas*); beef stew with wheat flat bread (*goraasa be dama*).
- Vegetables stuffed with meat and rice.
- For the Nuer tribe (in the south): beef, milk, sourdough corn pasta (*kop*), millet flat bread (*injera*).
- Rich sweets: custard (crème caramel); layered pastries soaked in syrup (*baseema*, similar to Egyptian *baklawa*).

Styles of Eating

- One to three meals and snacks daily.
- Eating habits differ by region and ethnic group. Most in the north and west eat Arab (Egyptian) style: around a common dish served on a low table; people eating with the fingers of their right hand only; men eating separately from women and young children. In the south, some families sit on a mat to share the bowl of staple. Accompanying stews or sauces are served on individual plates or smaller bowls and eaten either with the fingers or spoons. For guests, meals often include several dishes. All dishes are served simultaneously.
- Breakfast: millet porridge or flat bread (*kisra/khubz/goraasa*), fried bread, beans (*fuul medames*), coffee/tea.
- Lunch: thick porridge or flat bread, appetizers (yogurt and cucumber salad, eggplant salad), stuffed tomato, spicy relish, fresh fruit, coffee, custard (crème caramel).
- Evening meal: light, with thick porridge or flat bread; beans or other cooked vegetable stew/sauce with or without meat; fresh fruit; coffee/tea.
- Hot relish (*shata*) is made available to those who want.
- Dessert is usually fresh fruit. A sweet or pastry is usually served with coffee. Arab, Egyptian, Turkish-style sweets and pastry in the north.
- Snacks: seasonal fresh fruit (banana, mango, orange, etc.), flat bread (*khubz*, *kisra*, *goraasa*), *tamiya*.
- Drinks: coffee is the most common drink in the north, served immediately to guests (see Eritrea for the box "Coffee Ritual"). Coffee is roasted or dry-fried before use. It is ground immediately; brewed with spices such as cardamom, ginger, or cloves; then served in small cups. It is also served at the end of a meal. Sweet tea, hibiscus flower tea (*karkadeyh* or *karekare*), fruit juices, beer, bottled soft drinks, sorghum or millet home-brewed beer (*merissa*) (in the non-Muslim south), fermented honey or date wine (*tedj*), distilled sorghum or dates (*aragi*).

Yogurt and Cucumber Salad (Salatet Zabady bil Ajur)

This is a salad from north Sudan, usually served as an appetizer or as an accompaniment to a main meat, chicken, or fish dish.

2 large cucumbers, peeled and diced
2 cups yogurt
½ tsp salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp black pepper
8 large lettuce leaves

(*continued*)

Combine cucumber with yogurt, salt, garlic, and pepper.
Serve on lettuce leaves.

Peanut Soup (Shorba)

This soup is originally made from meaty beef or lamb bones. Variations on this soup include adding cooked rice, carrots, cabbage, or other seasonal vegetables during the final 15 minutes of cooking.

½ pound lean ground beef (or substitute chicken or turkey)
5 cups beef broth
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
6 peppercorns
1 tsp salt
1 cinnamon stick, 2 inches long
2 cardamom pods
2 TBS natural peanut butter
juice of ½ lemon

Bring to a boil the meat, broth, onion, garlic, peppercorns, salt, cinnamon, and cardamom.
Reduce heat, simmering for 30 minutes.
Discard peppercorns, cinnamon, and cardamom.
Blend until smooth the peanut butter and 4 tablespoons stock from the cooking meat, ensuring there are no lumps; add to soup.
Simmer for 3 minutes until soup thickens. Turn off heat.
Stir in lemon juice just before serving.
Serve in individual bowls.

Spicy Relish (Shata)

This table condiment is often served with main dishes for diners to help themselves.

½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp dried red pepper flakes
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
⅔ tsp salt

Combine all ingredients; set aside for 30 minutes.
Serve in small bowls at the table.

Jute Mallow Soup (Molokhiya)

Molokhiya are the young shoots of the jute mallow (*Corchorus olitorius*), a plant grown for its fiber. They are available fresh, frozen, and sometimes dried, in

African and some Middle Eastern shops. They give a silky smooth, slippery consistency to soups and stews, hence are also called bush okra, and are widely used in Egypt, Sudan, and elsewhere.

Serve this as a soup, accompanied by rice or bread.

1 pound dried (or 2 pounds fresh or frozen) *molokhiya*, leaves only
2 cups chicken or beef stock
1½ TBS butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp coriander powder
3 TBS tomato paste
salt, black pepper to taste
juice of ½ lemon

Add *molokhiya* to stock; simmer at very low heat, stirring only once.
In a skillet over low heat, melt butter.
Fry garlic, stirring until light golden (about 1 minute).
Stir in coriander and tomato paste; fry for 1 minute.
Add garlic and tomato mixture to *molokhiya*; stir slowly.
Simmer for 5 minutes, or to preferred consistency. Adjust seasoning to taste.
Add more stock or water to thin the broth, if desired.
Serve with a dash or more of lemon juice.

Stuffed Tomato (Bandoora Machschi)

Stuffed vegetables are a popular dish made all over the Middle East. The variation given here is made in north Sudan and is similar to Egyptian versions. This is served as an appetizer or as a main dish with other side dishes.

2 TBS oil
1 pound ground beef (or substitute chicken or turkey or lamb)
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
2 TBS dill, minced
½ cup cooked rice
4 large firm tomatoes
2 TBS butter

Sauce

1 16-ounce can chopped tomatoes
⅔ cup water or stock
½ tsp salt
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ tsp cinnamon
a handful of green olives and tomato slices, for garnish

In a heavy saucepan, heat oil; sauté meat until lightly browned.
Stir in garlic; sauté for 1 minute.
Stir in salt, pepper, dill, and rice; mix well. Remove from heat.
Prepare the tomato shells: from the stem end of each tomato, cut a thin "lid" but do not sever it completely. Leave a "hinge" of attached flesh.
Scoop out the pulp with a teaspoon, leaving a shell.
Chop the pulp and reserve.

(*continued*)

Fill tomato with beef-rice mixture; close the tomato lid.
In the same saucepan, melt butter until hot; roll tomatoes gently until they glisten. (Ensure tomato lid stays closed.)
Add all ingredients for sauce except the garnish; stir in reserved tomato pulp and any remaining filling.
Simmer gently over low flame for 20 to 30 minutes. Adjust seasoning.
Transfer tomatoes carefully to a deep serving dish; ladle remaining sauce and filling above them.
Surround with raw tomato slices and green olives.

Preacher's Okra (Mullah Bamyah)

Serve this dish hot with rice for a light meal, or cold as an appetizer.

1 pound ground beef
5 garlic cloves, minced
salt, pepper to taste
1 whole chili pepper (optional)
½ tsp cinnamon powder
2 TBS vegetable oil
2 pounds okra, stems removed (Do not cut okra.)
2 cups finely chopped ripe tomatoes, fresh or canned

Mix meat with minced garlic; season with salt, pepper, chili pepper, and cinnamon. Set aside.
Heat oil and lightly fry okra. Remove from heat and divide into two portions.
Arrange a single layer of okra in a heavy pot.
Cover with all the seasoned meat in one layer.
Top with another layer of okra.
Pour tomatoes over okra.
Sprinkle tomatoes lightly with salt and pepper; simmer over very low heat for 30 minutes, until tomato juices have been absorbed.
Serve hot or cold.

Meatballs (Koftah)

This is a popular dish, commonly made for the main meal. Authentically, this is prepared by passing all ingredients twice together through a meat grinder. The method given here is quicker and more convenient. Serve with rice or bread and side dishes of cooked vegetables or salads.

2 pounds ground beef
2 onions, finely chopped
1 slice soft white bread, crust removed, soaked in ¼ cup water and squeezed of excess water
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
metal skewers or oil for frying

In a food processor, process all ingredients together until very smooth. Form into sausage shapes, about ¼-inch thick and 2–3 inches long.
Skewer and grill over hot coals, or shallow-fry in medium hot oil until brown all over.

Sorghum Crepes
(Kisra)

These thin crepes are eaten like bread, served with stews, spicy relish (*shata*), or even with a simple sauce of water, salt, and chilies. For an authentic flavor, use unroasted sesame oil, that is, not Chinese (which is made from roasted seeds). These are best eaten freshly made.

1½ cups sorghum flour (available from health food or organic stores)
1 cup water
unroasted sesame seed oil or other vegetable oil
⅛ cup (or more water)

In a blender or mixer, mix the sorghum flour and 1 cup water to a thick paste.
Let stand, covered, at room temperature for 12–24 hours to ferment.
Just before cooking, dilute to a thinner batter (but not too thin), by adding ⅛ cup water.
Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat; lightly brush with oil.
Pour ⅓ cup batter in the middle of the skillet; quickly spread to a very thin (translucent), even layer using a wooden or heatproof spatula.
As soon as the edges begin to dry and lift up, in about 1 minute, loosen the crepe all around with a thin or flexible spatula or turner.
Carefully peel off the crepe; set aside on a plate and keep warm, covered with a clean, dry towel.
Continue cooking the rest of the batter, oiling the skillet each time.
Serve immediately.

Cinnamon Tea

Sudanese drink a lot of tea, usually with a sugar cube held between the front teeth. Tiny sips of tea are taken through the cube. Eventually, the cube dissolves. It takes long practice to achieve this dexterity; it is acceptable to place the cube into the teacup.

4 cups water
5 tsp loose tea leaves (1 tsp per cup + 1 tsp for the teapot)
4 cinnamon sticks (each about 1 inch long)
4 sugar cubes

(*continued*)

Bring water to a boil; turn off heat, let stand for 1–2 minutes.
Place tea leaves in a warm teapot. Add water.
Allow to infuse until very strong, for about 3–5 minutes.
Place 1 cinnamon stick in each teacup.
Pour hot tea over cinnamon.
Pass sugar cubes in a bowl.

Cassava Fritters (Tamiya)

This south Sudanese fritter is a variation on Egyptian *ta'amiya*, more commonly known elsewhere as *falafel*. However, it is not made of beans, but cassava, the southern staple. If available, use palm oil as it imparts a reddish color to the fritters. Serve as a snack or sweet with tea.

1 cup cassava flour (yucca or yuca flour, available from Latin American/Brazilian or African stores)
1 egg, beaten, for binding
½ cup water
vegetable oil for deep-frying (preferably palm oil, or peanut oil mixed with palm oil)
¼ cup honey

Blend cassava flour with egg; add water gradually to make a stiff paste. (It may not be necessary to use all the water.)
With lightly floured hands, form into sausage shapes, about 1-inch thick and 4 inches long.
Refrigerate for 20–30 minutes.
Heat enough oil for deep-frying to about 350°F.
Slide fritters gently into oil. Turn frequently to brown all round.
Remove and drain.
Serve hot.
Pass a bowl of honey for dipping.

SURINAME

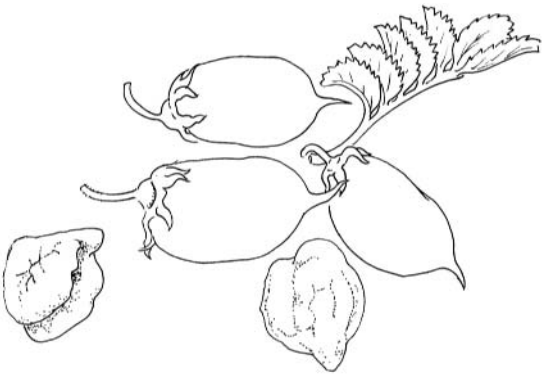
The smallest independent country in South America, Suriname was a Dutch colony until independence in 1975. Suriname's northern terrain is arable lowland, and with the tropical climate, rice, fruits and vegetables, and livestock are raised. The coast and rivers yield fish and shellfish. The population comprises many ethnic groups: East Indians, mixed, Indonesian, African, Chinese, Amerindian, European, and American. The East Indians (called "Hindustanis") and the Indonesians (called "Javanese") descend from colonial plantation workers brought in by the Dutch. Surinamese cuisine is thus a rich meld of the diverse cuisines of these groups, using locally available ingredients.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, cassava, plantain, potato, corn.
- Fish, seafood, beef, pork, chicken and other poultry, eggs, dairy products, wild game.
- Cabbage, green beans (called *kouseband*), endive-like *amsoy*, lentils and other legumes, sweet potato, okra, callaloo (leaves of taro tubers).
- Banana, pineapple, coconut, mango, papaya, exotic palm nuts (orange *awarra* and brown *maripa*), peanut, other nuts.
- Seasonings: East Indian curry spices (turmeric, fenugreek, coriander, cumin, etc.), Indonesian spices and herbs, Chinese spices and herbs, coconut milk, peanuts or peanut butter, dried fish/shrimp, and several hot chili peppers (including one named Madame Jeannette). Chinese soy sauce, Indonesian soy sauce (*ketjap*).

Typical Dishes

- One-dish meals: rice, chicken or beef or fish stewed with beans and other vegetables (*moksi meti*).
- Indonesian-style spicy meat and vegetable stews.
- Creole-style (mixed African-European) chicken pie with vegetables (*pastei*); peanut soup with plaintain dumplings or plantain noodles.
- African-style okra and cassava soup; chicken and pureed *tayer* (cassava-like tuber) casserole; beans and meat with rice.



CHICKPEA

- East Indian–style curries of vegetables, pulses, fish/seafood, or meat.
- Chinese-influenced *chow-mein*, fried rice, vegetable stir-fries.
- Coconut-based desserts.
- Beverages: soft drinks, coconut and other fresh fruit juices, local rice beer; ginger beer (not a beer but a ginger-lemon drink).

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals and snacks eaten daily, with main meal at midday.
- Foods and the styles of eating vary depending on the ethnic group.
- Breakfast: urban style—bread, butter, jam, coffee. Traditional style—rice or flat bread, egg, lentils, coffee.
- Lunch: Indonesian-style main meal of spicy meat and vegetable stew, plain or fried rice, mixed vegetable salad (*gado-gado*) with peanut dressing, skewered meat with spicy peanut sauce (*satay*), dessert of fresh fruit. Fried banana is a common accompaniment to Indonesian-style dishes.
- Supper: mixed African-Creole and East Indian style light meal of peanut soup or lentil stew, flat bread (*roti*), mango chutney, fruit.
- With meals, drinks are usually a soft drink, or a fruit drink made by diluting fruit syrups.
- Snacks: Indonesian-style noodles; East Indian flat bread (*roti*) with curried potatoes, chicken, and vegetables; savory pastries filled with potatoes and peas (*samosa*); fried chickpea or lentil balls (*phulauri*).
- Shaved ice with various fruit syrup flavors, bought from street stalls.
- Many types of restaurants, bars, and cafes serve a range of local foods and international fast foods.

Peanut Soup (Pinda Soep)

A commonly prepared soup, this is usually served African-Creole style with plantain noodles (called *tom-tom*).

4 cups water or stock (made with 2 vegetable bouillon cubes)
1 cup smooth peanut butter
3 TBS oil
2 onions, finely chopped
2 cups chicken breast, diced
salt, pepper to taste
1 small green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
2 TBS celery, finely chopped (or cilantro)

In a stewing pan, bring stock to a boil. Lower heat to simmer.
In a bowl, put peanut butter and carefully whisk in ½ cup hot stock, mixing well. Set aside.

Heat oil over medium heat in a skillet. Sauté onions until golden brown. Take out half of onions and set aside for garnish.
Stir chicken, salt, and pepper into onions in the skillet, frying for 5 minutes. Turn off heat.
Add chicken, onion, and peanut butter mixture to simmering stock; cook until chicken is done, for about 10 minutes.
Check seasoning.
Garnish with green pepper, celery or cilantro, and fried onions.

Fried Bean Balls
(Phulauri)

An East Indian–style dish made with any kind of bean, pea, or lentil, this snack is best eaten warm, dipped in a sweet-sour mango chutney. It can also be a first course.

1 cup yellow split peas
1 onion, chopped
3 gloves garlic, crushed
salt to taste
a pinch of cayenne pepper
1 tsp cumin seeds
oil for frying

Soak the yellow split peas in water overnight.
Process in a food processor the peas with onion, garlic, salt, and cayenne to a paste.
Dry-fry the cumin seeds in a hot skillet for 1 minute; cover the skillet to prevent cumin seeds from jumping about.
Add cumin to the processed peas and mix well.
Form mixture into golf-sized balls.
Heat oil till medium hot; deep-fry the *phulauri* until golden brown.
Serve at once with mango chutney.

Mango Chutney

This sweet-sour chutney can be served with any East Indian fried or curried dish.

1 green or semi-ripe mango, peeled and cubed
1 tsp salt
3 TBS mint, chopped
1½ tsp sugar (optional)

Blend or process all the ingredients to a rough puree.

Pan-Fried Flat Bread (Roti)

This bread is eaten hot with lentils, vegetables, or curries for lunch or dinner. Traditionally, this is made with clarified butter (ghee).

2 cups wholemeal flour
1 tsp baking powder
1½ TBS melted butter
½ tsp salt
¾ cup warm water
2 TBS butter or more for frying and brushing on cooked *roti*

In a food processor, mix flour, baking powder, butter, salt, and water just until it forms a ball. If the dough is not soft enough, add a bit more warm water.
Remove dough; knead until soft and pliable.
Set aside for 30 minutes, covered with a moist towel.
Divide dough into 8 pieces; roll out each piece onto a floured surface to about 6 inches in diameter.
Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat.
Melt a little butter; quickly swirl to coat the surface.
Place *roti*, cooking each side for 1½ minutes, or until small bubbles appear and *roti* is golden brown.
Remove from pan, brush with a little butter.
Keep warm in a low oven until all have been cooked.
Serve at once.

Lentil Stew (Dhal)

This popular East Indian–style stew can be made with any kind of bean, pea, or lentil, and can be eaten at lunch or dinner or as a sauce with pan-fried bread.

5 TBS butter
2 onions, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup red or green lentils, washed and drained
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp curry powder
1 TBS dried thyme
1 bay leaf
3½ cups water
salt, pepper to taste
1 firm (preferably unripe) mango, diced
1 tsp cumin powder
3 TBS chopped cilantro

Heat 3 tablespoons butter in a saucepan; fry half the onion and half the garlic until golden brown.
Sir in lentils, turmeric, curry powder, thyme, bay leaf, water, salt, and pepper.
Simmer for 20 minutes; add mango and cook for another 15 minutes; keep hot.

Heat remaining 2 tablespoons butter in skillet; fry remaining onion and garlic with cumin until golden brown.
Pour over lentils.
Serve hot, garnished with cilantro.

Coconut Milk Jelly (Gelatin a la Ponche Crema)

This is a commonly served dessert. As accompaniment, substitute any fruit in season: orange, kiwi fruit, banana.

2 envelopes or 5 tsp unflavored gelatin
1 cup whole milk
1 cup canned coconut milk
1 cup condensed milk
3 egg yolks
1 ripe mango, cubed
1 red grapefruit, sectioned and all white pith discarded

Put gelatin to soften in a bowl of cold water for approximately 5 minutes.
In a saucepan, combine milk, coconut milk, and condensed milk; heat until just hot. Do not let it boil, or it will curdle.
Remove from heat; stir in egg yolks.
Stir gelatin into milk and egg mixture.
Strain through a sieve into a 1-quart mold.
Refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight.
Unmold and surround with mango cubes and grapefruit sections.

SWAZILAND

Swaziland is a landlocked country in southern Africa that was a British protectorate from 1902 until independence in 1968. Mostly mountainous with a hot to subtropical climate, sugar is a major export crop, and fruits, vegetables, and livestock are raised. The population is predominantly Swazi with minorities of Zulu, European, and Mozambican refugees. Traditional Swazi cooking was simple and mainly based on milk and sorghum. Disease among local cattle seriously affected milk supply, most recently in 2001, and led to the adaption of other food sources, such as cornmeal.

Foodstuffs

- Sorghum (traditional), corn (contemporary).
- Rice, bread, scones, pasta.
- Beef, goat, lamb, wild game, chicken, eggs, milk (fresh, sour), canned fish, canned corned beef, canned sausages.
- Potato (white and sweet), beans and other legumes, cabbage, spinach, tomato, beetroot, wild greens.
- Citrus (grapefruit, pomelo), pineapple, peanut, sugarcane, canned fruit.
- Seasonings: onion, peanut, chilies.

Typical Dishes

- Traditional staple: sorghum porridge eaten with sour milk (*emasi*).
- Contemporary staple: stiff cornmeal porridge (*liphalishi*) eaten with vegetable stew or relish (*umshibo*); or with a meat, chicken, or fish stew (*sithulo*). Cornmeal bread, cornmeal "rice" (cornmeal milled to rice-grain size).
- Vegetable dishes: stews of pumpkin, beans, or greens with samp (hominy, or dried pounded corn), with or without crushed or ground peanuts.
- Meat dishes: grilled goat, mutton, or beef; roast, fried, or stewed chicken; stews of meat and vegetables—tripe and potato (*ulusu namazambane*), beef and cabbage (*sidlwadlwa*).
- Drinks: fresh or sour milk, home-brewed beer (not considered a drink but a food), bottled soft drinks.

Styles of Eating

- Traditional meals: two a day, at mid-morning and at sunset. Mid-morning meal was informal, with different age and gender groups eating separately at different times.
- Main meal was in the evening, eaten together by all age and gender groups. Families try to eat together. Hands are washed before eating. The head of the household and adult males are always served first, but the first spoonful is set aside. It is believed that if the first spoonful is eaten by the household head, he would be among the first to die in battle. Adult women and children are served next; the last to be served is the preparer of the meal.
- Porridge eaten in individual wooden bowls or enamel plates; side dish served in a smaller bowl. Fingers of the right hand used to mold porridge into balls to be dipped into side dish and eaten.
- Sometimes spoons and teaspoons are used for very runny foods.
- Contemporary meals: breakfast between 8 and 9 a.m. (after children have left for school); lunch (main meal) after children come back from school (2 p.m.); supper between 6 and 7 p.m.
- Breakfast: soft sour porridge with sugar (or vegetable relish); or bread, peanut butter/margarine, jam. Eggs when available. Tea/coffee.
- Lunch: cornmeal porridge and vegetable stew (also called relish).
- Supper: light meal of tea, bread, scones, or dumplings; or leftovers from lunch.
- Sunday dinner (midday): Westernized meal, with rice; fried, roast or stewed chicken; salad; cooked pumpkin or mashed potato and cabbage; dessert of jelly or canned fruit with custard.
- Snacks in between meals: sugarcane, boiled beans, wild fruit, roasted peanuts, fermented porridge (*amahewu*), tea, softdrinks, bread, potato chips, sweets (chocolate, candy).
- Portuguese and Italian food are available in restaurants in the capital (mainly for tourists).

Beef, Cabbage, and Samp Stew (Sidlwadlwa)

This is served for the main meal with a green vegetable dish, such as spinach porridge. The traditional *sidlwadlwa* is a rich meat stew.

1½ cups samp (hominy or dried pounded corn)
3 cups water
2 TBS oil
2 pounds boneless beef, diced
2 tomatoes, diced
1 cup beef stock or water
salt, pepper to taste
2 cups shredded cabbage
1 cup peanut butter

Soak samp overnight in cold water; drain and cover with fresh water. Simmer for 1 hour, or until soft.
In another covered saucepan, heat oil and brown beef on all sides.
Stir in tomatoes, stock, salt, and pepper.
Cover and simmer for 15 minutes, or until beef is tender.

(*continued*)

Stir in cabbage and peanut butter; simmer for 5–8 minutes, or until cabbage is done.
Add a bit more stock or water if sauce is too thick.
Stir in the samp.
Serve hot.

Sugar Bean Porridge (Sishwala)

Regular white beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) are known as sugar beans in Swaziland. This porridge is served for breakfast. The traditional way is to soak the dried beans overnight and simmer them for an hour until softened. This recipe is a convenient alternative.

4 cups water
¼ tsp salt
2 cups cornmeal
2 cups canned white (navy) or kidney beans, drained

In a saucepan, bring to a simmer the water and salt.
Slowly add cornmeal, mixing well with a wooden spoon.
Cook for 15–20 minutes until thickened.
Stir in beans, and simmer until heated through.
Serve at once.

Maize Bread (Mealie Bread)

Maize or corn, introduced by Europeans, has become the major staple of almost all Southern African peoples, supplanting the sorghum traditionally eaten in Swaziland. Serve this with any meal or at snack time.

2 eggs
1½ cups flour
3 tsp baking powder
⅛ tsp salt
1½ cups cornmeal
1 cup milk

In a food processor, blend until smooth the eggs, flour, baking powder, salt, cornmeal, and milk.
Set aside for 5 minutes.
Pour into a lightly buttered large loaf pan or a 9×13-inch baking pan.
Bake at 400°F for 15 minutes.
Reduce heat to 375°F and bake for another 10 minutes, or until it tests done.
Serve warm or cold.

Avocado, Radish, Peanut, and Ginger Salad (Slaai)

This salad is typically served with a roast or fried chicken dish for Sunday dinner for Christian Swazis.

2 TBS lemon juice
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp salt
2 large ripe avocados, peeled carefully, cut into ½-inch cubes
4 red radishes, finely sliced
½ cup toasted peanuts, chopped

Mix well lemon juice, ginger, and salt.
Pour over vegetables to coat thoroughly.
Marinate, refrigerated, for at least 30 minutes.
Serve sprinkled with peanuts.

Pumpkin Soup

Pumpkins and squashes are very important in the Swazi diet. The pumpkins and other newly harvested crops feature during the royal Incwala ceremony: before the king has partaken of the first fruits, no one may eat of the new harvest.

2 TBS butter
1 onion, chopped
2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
1½ pounds pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and diced
salt, pepper to taste
1 fresh red chili, cored, seeded, and shredded (optional)
5 cups vegetable or chicken stock

Heat butter in a heavy saucepan; fry onion until soft.
Add potatoes, pumpkin, salt, and pepper; fry for 1–2 minutes.
Add chili, if using.
Stir in stock, cover, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat, simmer until vegetables are soft, for about 20–30 minutes.
Remove from heat; mash vegetables with a potato masher (or in a blender).
Reheat and serve immediately.

Samp and Beans with Nuts

Samp is another word for hominy or dried corn. It is made from the hard kernels from corncobs left to dry on the stalk before being harvested, a traditional way of preservation. The kernels are traditionally pounded in a mortar and pestle before being soaked overnight and then boiled to be soft enough to eat. Samp

eaten together with beans is a highly nutritious food combination. This recipe is a faster and more convenient method of cooking this traditional dish.

1 cup canned hominy
1 cup canned kidney, pinto, or other beans
1 onion, chopped
4 cups chicken or beef stock
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup roasted peanuts (ground) or natural (unsweetened) peanut butter
½ cup skim milk powder
4 tsp butter

In a covered saucepan, bring the hominy, beans, onion, and stock to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in salt, pepper, peanuts or peanut butter, mixing thoroughly.
Simmer for 5 minutes, or until heated through.
Stir in milk powder and butter, or pass around separately for diners to serve themselves.
Serve hot.

Spinach Porridge (Isijabane)

Green vegetables, whether gathered from the wild or from cultivated plants, are a traditional relish or sauce eaten with the stiff porridge staple. Diced pumpkin can be substituted for spinach. Serve with milk for lunch.

1 cup frozen chopped spinach, defrosted
1 onion, minced
¼ tsp salt
4 cups water
2 cups cornmeal

Bring to a simmer the spinach, onion, salt, and water.
Slowly add the cornmeal, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
Simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring frequently until cooked through.
Adjust seasoning and serve.

Carrot and Green Bean Soup (Indlangala)

Serve this with rice, cornmeal, or corn bread as a side dish for lunch, or as a first course for Sunday dinner.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and diced
½ cup unsweetened natural peanut butter
salt, pepper to taste
4 cups water
½ cup fresh or frozen green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces

Heat oil; fry onion until soft.
Stir in carrots and fry for 2–3 minutes.
Add peanut butter, salt, and pepper.
Add water gradually, stirring well until peanut butter is well mixed. Simmer for 15 minutes; add beans.
Simmer for another 5–8 minutes, or until beans are heated through.
Serve immediately.

Cornmeal Pancakes

Serve these for breakfast or as a snack with fresh or sour milk (yogurt) to drink.

4 cups water
2 cups cornmeal
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 cup flour
frying oil
confectioners' or ordinary sugar

Bring the water to a simmer; slowly trickle in cornmeal while stirring continuously with a wooden spoon.
Continue to stir until cornmeal is thick, for about 15–20 minutes.
Stir in sugar; set aside to cool.
In a blender or food processor, blend eggs, flour, and the cooled cornmeal to a smooth batter, the consistency of cream. If necessary, add a bit of water or milk to achieve this consistency.
Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat.
When hot, place just a film of oil.
Pour ¼ cup batter and allow it to spread.
Cook until golden brown on both sides.
Keep warm while making the rest.
Serve warm, sprinkled with confectioners' sugar.

SWEDEN

Sweden is a Nordic constitutional monarchy renowned as a welfare state. With a terrain of rolling plains, a cold, temperate climate (the north is subarctic), and less than 10 percent arable land, agriculture is not a major industry; nevertheless, wheat, other cold-hardy cereals, and livestock are raised. The population comprises Swedes, Finns, and Saami (Lapp) with Norwegian, Danish, and other European minority groups (Yugoslavs, Greeks, and Turks). Swedish cuisine centers on simple and local ingredients (fish, seafood, dairy products, peas, potatoes) eaten and prepared in celebration of their seasonality.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: potato, wheat.
- Rye, barley, oats.
- Fish, lamb, beef, pork, veal, chicken, eggs, dairy products (cheese, cream), preserved meats (sausages, ham, bacon).
- Peas, carrot, lettuce.
- Seasonings: dill, juniper, parsley, mustard, cardamom (for sweet pastries).

Typical Dishes

- Hard bread (*knäckebröd/hårt bröd*), eaten with every meal.
- Herring dishes: fried, fermented, marinated/pickled with herbs, mustard, berries. Salmon dishes: smoked or marinated with dill (*gravad lax*).
- Crayfish: feasted on throughout August.
- Meatballs (*köttbullar*).
- Vegetable dishes: stuffed cabbage, creamed cauliflower, potato and anchovy casserole (*Janssons frestelse*).
- Sweets: baked apples, dried fruit cream, lacy meringue cake (*spettekaka*), cinnamon rolls (*kanelbullar*), sweet Easter bun with whipped cream and marzipan (*semla*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- *Smörgåsbord*: a buffet of many kinds of cold and hot dishes (fish, meat, vegetables, salads), to be eaten as appetizers or as a complete meal.

- Breakfast: pancakes, beef hash (*pytt i panna*), coffee, milk.
- Lunch: salmon, creamed potatoes, salad, dessert.
- Dinner: yellow pea soup on Thursdays, served with cheese, hardbread. Dessert: pancakes with lingonberry jam and whipped cream, milk to drink.
- Coffeebreak (*fika*) at mid-morning and mid-afternoon: coffee or tea with cinnamon roll (*kanelbulle*) or other sweet pastry. Coffee parties (*kafferep*) feature at least seven kinds of homemade pastries.
- Drinks: apple juice, soft drinks, milk, brown lemonade (*julmust*), beer, apple/pear cider, fruit beverage (*saft*). Swedes drink a lot of coffee. They are the world's second highest drinkers of coffee per capita.
- Swedes often eat out for lunch. Foreign food such as Mexican, Thai, Chinese are popularly eaten. American fast-food chains are present in big cities. Pizzerias are common, though pizza is made Swedish style, with seafood and a salad on top. Many Swedes are vegetarians, so a vegetarian menu is common in restaurants.

Fermented North Baltic Herring (Surströmming)

A Swedish delicacy, banned from the United States as "unfit for human consumption" (notwithstanding the fact that the Swedes enjoy it happily throughout the year). North Baltic Herring, which live in relatively less saline waters, are caught in the spring, fermented in a special process, and canned. The cans are frozen to retard further fermentation. In case you should be fortunate enough to access a can, here is a recipe. Otherwise, read for edification.

1 can *surströmming*
2 slices Swedish buttered dry rye bread per person
1 medium hot, freshly boiled potato per person (or several small new potatoes)
1 yellow onion, sliced thin
milk, sour milk, or beer

Remove can from freezer 48 hours before eating.
With all diners surrounding the can, cover the can with a kitchen towel. Open with a can opener, the entire operation covered with kitchen towel. At the first bite of the can opener, all present are expected to take a deep breath, to immunize the nasal passages.
Serve 1 filet per person with hot potato, a few slices of onion, 2 slices buttered bread, and lots to drink!

Salted Herring (Inlagd Sill)

This is a common appetizer as well as a snack. It can also serve as the main dish for a light meal with a salad. Accompany with buttered bread.

4 filets of salted herring
¾ cup sugar
½ cup white vinegar
1 cup water
5 tsp allspice
1 bay leaf
1 red onion, sliced into thin rings
dill sprigs, 1-inch pieces

(*continued*)

Soak herring in cold water overnight; drain and set aside.
In a bowl, mix dressing of sugar, vinegar, water, allspice, bay leaf, and onion.
Pour over herring; refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
Slice herring into ½-inch slices.
Spoon dressing over; garnish with onion and dill.

Potato and Anchovy Casserole or Jansson's Temptation (Jansson's Frestelse)

This was purportedly named for a popular Swedish film of 1929, or for a Swedish opera singer of the nineteenth century, Pelle Janzon, who was also a famous cook. This is usually found on smorgasbords, especially during the Christmas season. It is also served as a late night snack, called *vickning*, with pickled beets.

1 onion, sliced
4 TBS butter
5 large potatoes, peeled and cut as shoestring potatoes
1 small can anchovy fillets, chopped roughly (reserve liquid), preferably Swedish sweet pickled
1¼ cups cream
3 TBS bread crumbs

In a skillet over medium heat, sauté onion lightly in 2 tablespoons butter; remove from heat.
Into a buttered 8×8-inch baking dish, alternately layer potatoes, onion, and anchovies; starting and ending with potatoes.
Blend anchovy liquid with half the cream and pour over potatoes.
Dot with remaining butter; sprinkle with bread crumbs.
Bake in a preheated 390°F oven for about 20 minutes.
Pour in remaining cream; bake for 30 minutes more, or until potatoes are tender.

Swedish Beef Stew (Kalops)

Serve this for dinner with potatoes (plain or casseroled), pickled beets, and tossed salad.

3 TBS butter
1½ pounds boneless stewing beef, cubed
3 TBS flour
1¼ tsp salt
2 onions, sliced
1 bay leaf
10 whole allspice berries
2 cups water

Heat butter in a heavy saucepan; brown meat well on all sides.
Sprinkle with flour and salt, stirring well.
Add onions, bay leaf, allspice, and water.
Cover and simmer till tender, for 1½ to 2 hours.

Meat Dumplings (Palt)

Meatballs are a common dish for dinner, often served with seasonal berries made into a tart-sweet sauce. This recipe makes an interesting variant on the usual meatballs.

2 boiled potatoes, peeled and mashed
6 finely grated potatoes
1 tsp salt
2 cups flour
½ pound ground meat, formed into marble-sized balls
6 pints simmering water, lightly salted

In a food processor, mix all ingredients except meat to make a dough.
Take a handful of dough; shape into an even patty.
Wrap around meatball and seal to form a round ball.
Continue with remaining dough and meatballs.
Gently slip balls into simmering water.
Continue to simmer for about 30–40 minutes, or until meat filling is done.
Serve hot, topped with butter and lingonberry or cranberry sauce.

Ginger Snaps (Pepparkakor)

These spice-laden cookies are a traditional Christmas treat. To give them a more intense taste, do as the Swedes do: grind or pound the cloves and cardamom from whole seeds.

1½ cups hot sugar syrup (½ cup brown sugar dissolved in 1 cup boiling water)
1¼ cups sugar
1 TBS dry ground ginger
1 TBS cinnamon
1 tsp cloves, preferably ground from whole cloves
1 tsp cardamom, preferably freshly crushed seeds
1½ cups butter, softened
2 tsp baking soda
4 cups flour
¾ cup whipping cream

In a mixer, blend thoroughly the syrup, sugar, spices, and butter; let cool slightly.
Dissolve baking soda in 1 tablespoon water; blend together with half the flour. Blend in syrup mixture.

(*continued*)

Whip cream to soft peaks; gradually blend into batter, a little at a time.
Cover dough; let rest overnight refrigerated.
Stir in remaining flour to make a firm dough.
Knead on a floured surface; roll out to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch and cut out using desired cookie shapes.
Place well apart on a greased and floured cookie sheet.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven just until slightly golden, for about 5–6 minutes.
Loosen cookies immediately upon removing from the oven; let cool completely on cookie sheet.

SWITZERLAND

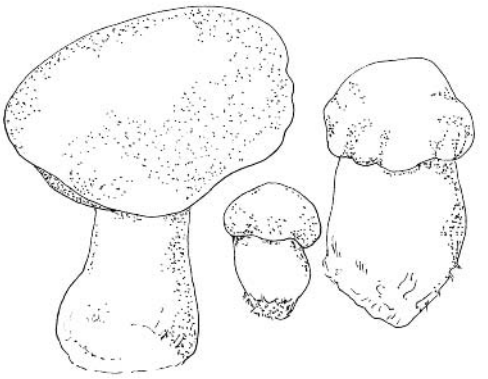
Switzerland was established by three cantons as a defensive alliance in 1291. Neighboring cantons joined at later stages. Largely mountainous with broad central valleys, the temperate climate of cold winters and cool to warm summers enables production of cereals, vegetables, and fruit, as well as raising of livestock for quality cheese and varied dairy products. The western end of the country is largely populated by French speakers, and food is influenced by that of eastern France. The center and eastern parts speak a German dialect, and the food is influenced by neighboring Germany and Austria. Another ethnic group of Romansch speakers lives in the Tyrol (see separate entry).

Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat, potato.
- Beef, pork, chicken and other poultry, eggs, dairy products (cream and cheese of many kinds), many kinds of sausages, air-dried hams and other preserved meats, fresh-water fish.
- Corn, Swiss chard, carrot, cabbage, lettuce, tomato, onion, shallots, mushrooms.
- Apple, grape, pear, apricot, peaches, cherry, blueberry, elderberry, and other berries.
- Seasonings: herbs, leek, onion, garlic, pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, cream, butter.

Typical Dishes

- Cheese-based and cream-based dishes: fondue, *raclette*, quiche, whole small baked cheese (*tomme*) served on salad, fried cheese on bread (*malakoff*).
- Vegetable dishes: braised Swiss chard; casseroles and souffles of cheese with eggplant, green beans, or asparagus; cheese-stuffed mushrooms. Potato dishes: grated potato cake (*rosti*); puree of leek and potato (*papet vaudois*); many regional soups of potato with cheese, sausages, or smoked meat.
- Italian-style dishes: blueberry risotto with boletus mushrooms; pizza; chicken cacciatore; Alpine farmer's macaroni (*aelplermagronen*).



BOLETUS MUSHROOM

- Meat dishes: roast lamb stuffed with Swiss chard and feta; table-grilled steak with flavored butter; veal in cream and mushroom sauce.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Table settings are standard European.
- Breakfast: *muesli*, porridge or bread, butter, jam, several cheeses, ham or sausage, eggs, fruit juice, fresh or cooked fruit, coffee.
- Lunch: light meal of pasta, pizza, quiche with salad, coffee.
- Dinner: can be a light meal, with bread, butter, cheese, or preserved meats (ham, sausage); or a heavy meal of three to four courses, including appetizer or soup; meat, chicken, or fish main dish; vegetable side dish; potato or rice or noodle side dish (depending on region); dessert or fruit; selection of cheeses.
- Desserts: apple tart, chocolate cake, ice cream, fruit compote (peach, apricot, or apple simmered with a bit of sugar), berry-filled cookies.
- Snacks: Ovaltine powder sprinkled on buttered bread; crepes filled with custard, nuts, or fruits; pizza; pasta; fried potatoes (*pommes frites*); sweet pastries (carrot cake, apricot flan).
- Drinks: apple and other fruit juices, apple cider (alcoholic), wine, hot chocolate malted drink (Ovaltine), milk, milk coffee; honey and wine (*acqua di miele alla Luganese*).
- Swiss eat out often.

Engadine-Style Barley Soup
(Engadiner Gerstensuppe)

8 ounces ham or smoked tongue, cubed small
8 ounces stewing beef, cubed
5 ounces barley
2 ounces green beans, trimmed
4 cups water
1 small cabbage, shredded
8 ounces potatoes, peeled and cut into thin strips
salt and pepper to taste
3 TBS cream
2 TBS flour

Bring ham, beef, barley, and beans to a boil in the water.
Simmer for 2 hours, partially covered.
Add cabbage and potatoes and simmer for 1 hour. Season.
Blend flour and cream. Add to soup for thickening, stirring well.
Bring to a boil once more, and serve.

Meat in Cream Sauce (Geschnetzeltes)

This is a specialty of Zurich, usually made with veal.

1½ pounds veal fillets (or ½-inch slices of beef or pork), cut into ½-inch cubes
½ ounce flour
2 ounces butter
1 small onion, chopped fine
¼ cup stock
salt and pepper to taste
3 TBS cream

Sprinkle meat with flour.
Heat butter in a pan. When foaming stops, fry onion until golden.
Add the meat. Fry over high heat, stirring constantly.
After about a minute (veal and pork will be whitish, beef lightly browned), pour in stock and season.
Cook for another 2 minutes. Add cream at the last minute and stir once.
Serve with plain rice or French fries.

Graubuenden-Style Fried Potatoes (Maluns la Lai)

This regional specialty from Graubuenden takes advantage of plentiful butter. It used to be made for the evening meal without sausages or bacon, just served with applesauce or other stewed fruit (apricot, peach) for children. For adults, this is served with milk coffee.

4 large floury potatoes (about 1½ pounds total weight), cooked in their skins, cooled (preferably at least overnight), peeled, and roughly crumbled
1 cup flour
1 tsp salt
1¼ cups butter
2 dry sausages, diced (or 1 cup lean smoked bacon, diced, or dry-cured ham)
4 TBS any mixed fresh herbs (parsley, thyme, chives), minced (optional)

Sprinkle potatoes with flour and salt; toss together lightly.
Melt ¼ cup butter in a heavy pan over medium heat. Once butter is very hot and frothing has subsided, stir in potato-flour mixture.
Increase heat to medium-high.
Keep stirring the mixture for about 30 minutes, gradually adding more and more butter, leaving about 3 tablespoons in reserve.
When crusty browned bits have formed, stir in sausages or bacon.
Cook until sausages are heated through.
Scatter the remaining butter to form little pools on top.
Sprinkle with herbs if desired.
Serve at table in pan.

Vaud Leek and Potatoes (Papet Vaudois)

This is a specialty from the Lake Geneva region, customarily served with local sausage, which is boiled together with the potatoes used in the dish. Serve for a midday or evening meal.

¼ cup pork dripping, or fatty bacon, diced
3 fat leeks (about 1½ pounds total weight), white part only, quartered lengthwise, sliced into 1-inch pieces
1 onion, sliced fine
¼ cup beef stock (increase to ½ cup if not using wine)
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
a pinch of nutmeg
¼ cup white wine (optional)
3 large waxy boiled potatoes, peeled and diced
¼ cup cream
2 TBS vinegar

In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, heat pork dripping or bacon until fat has melted.
Stir in leeks and onion; fry until softened.
Stir in stock, salt, pepper, nutmeg, and white wine (if using).
Cover and bring to a boil.
Add potatoes; cover and simmer until potatoes are heated through, for about 10 minutes.
Pour cream; sprinkle with vinegar.
Serve immediately.

Alpine Macaroni (Aelplermagrone)

This popular dish is served with a green salad and dried apple slices for a light meal.

½ cup butter
2 onions, sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
6 cups milk
1 TBS salt
3 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
2 cups macaroni (preferably straight)
1½ cups cheese (preferably Swiss, or any mild yellow cheese), grated or diced
½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper

Heat butter over medium heat in a heavy saucepan; stir in onions, fry until softened.
Stir in garlic and cook for 1 more minute. Set aside, including fat.
Bring to a boil the milk and salt. Add potatoes, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
Return to a boil; add macaroni. Reduce heat, simmer until *al dente*, stirring occasionally.

Pour noodles and potatoes into a warmed serving bowl.
Mix cheese and pepper in thoroughly.
Top with onion-butter mixture.

Bernese Hazelnut Cookies (Berner Haselnussleckerli)

Although traditional for Christmas, these can be served at any time for a snack with milk or coffee, or as dessert.

¾ cup hazelnuts, roasted, skins removed, and finely ground in food processor
¾ cup ground toasted almonds
⅔ cup sugar
½ cup mixed candied citrus peel, minced
1 tsp cinnamon
grated rind of 1 lemon
2 TBS apricot jam
4 egg whites, lightly beaten

In a food processor, blend thoroughly all ingredients. (Dough will be soft.)
Remove, wrap in plastic film, and leave at room temperature overnight.
Roll out dough ½-inch thick on a sugar-sprinkled surface.
Cut out to desired shapes with a cookie cutter.
Place without crowding on a buttered and floured baking sheet.
Set aside to dry at room temperature, for at least 2 hours.
Bake in a preheated 300°F oven until golden, for about 20–25 minutes.
Loosen cookies immediately upon removing from oven.
Cool on baking sheet for 5–7 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
Store in airtight container until needed.

SYRIA

Syria is an ancient country whose history includes Greek, Roman, Mongolian, Turkish, and French rule until independence in 1946. Its capital, Damascus, is considered among the world's oldest continually inhabited cities. Mostly desert and semiarid mountains, the Mediterranean climate of hot summers and mild winters along the coastal plains enables raising of wheat, fruit, vegetables, and livestock. Syrians are predominantly Arabs, with minorities of Kurds, Armenians, and other ethnic groups. Most Syrians are Muslim and thus eschew pork and alcohol. Syrian cuisine is varied and rich, influenced by Turkish, Persian, Armenian, Greek, and Arab elements.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat made into bread, cracked wheat (*bulghur*).
- Maize, barley.
- Lamb, beef, fish, seafood, chicken, eggs, dairy products (cow's and sheep's milk, white cheese, yogurt).
- Potato, olives, chickpeas and other legumes, eggplant, pumpkin and other gourds, cucumber, tomato, caper.
- Apricot, cherry, melon, grapes, oranges, apples, watermelon, almond, pistachio.
- Seasonings: herbs (parsley, marjoram, thyme, sage, mint); garlic; spices (paprika, cumin, cinnamon, nutmeg, etc.); spice blend (*baharat*); lemon; olive oil; sumac (purple sour berries of *Rhus coriaria*); *mahlab* (pit of the black cherry, *Prunus mahaleb*).

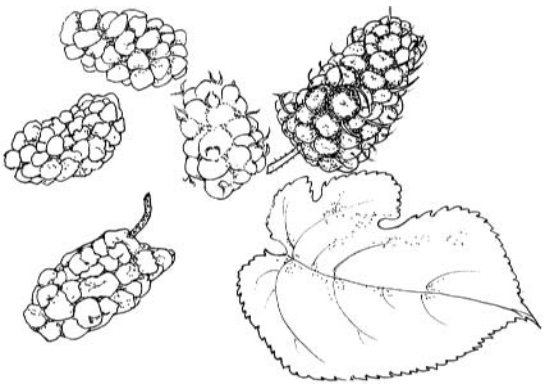
Typical Dishes

- Meat and bulghur balls (*kibbeh*) of many types; a specialty is grilled *kibbeh* in a quince and meat stew. Meatballs (*kofta*) with sour cherries.
- Grilled sliced meats, lamb or mutton and chicken, on vertical rotating spits (*shawarma*).
- Flat breads: *pita*, *markouk* (thin, translucent bread, called *lavash* in Lebanon).
- Vegetables stuffed with rice and meat: *warich eynab* (grape leaves), *cousa* (zucchini).

- Pickles: marinated eggplant (*makdoush*), olives, capers.
- Stews of meat, with or without fruit (usually quince or apricot) and vegetables: (beans) *fassouli*.
- Dishes made with yogurt.
- Rich sweets (specialties of Aleppo and Damascus) of nuts, syrup, and butter: round balls stuffed with crushed almonds, flavored with rosewater in a white syrup (*karabij*); *batlawa* with cherries; nut-filled shortbread pastries (*ma'moul*); Turkish-style jellied lemon candy (*jorbilbil*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Families try to eat together, especially for Thursday evening meal. There is no separation of men and women as in other Arab countries. Food is eaten with the fingers of the right hand; on formal occasions, Western utensils (knife, fork, spoon) may be used. Good manners require a guest to decline an offer of food or drink twice before accepting. However, refusing an offer completely is impolite.
- Breakfast is eaten very early and consists of flat bread, olives, white cheese, sliced tomatoes or cucumber; may include tomato soup, beans (*fuul*), or *feteh*, a mix of *fuul* and *hummus*; sweet dark coffee.
- Lunch: usually consists of four courses, served around 2 p.m.—appetizers (*mezze*) of *hummus*, beans, eggplant salad, pickles, and the like, eaten with flat bread; grilled or stewed meat (lamb (preferred), chicken, or fish) accompanied by salads and rice; hot coffee/tea; fruits or ice cream and/or sweet pastry.



MULBERRY, FRESH AND DRIED

- Evening meal: usually light, served very late, around 10 p.m.; similar to breakfast; sometimes eaten out.
- Snacks: grilled lamb, more commonly chicken in a pita with cut-up vegetables (*shawarma*); grilled skewered cubed meat or meatballs (*kebab*); *falafel*; bulghur and meatballs (*kibbeh*).
- Drinks: yogurt drink (*ayran*); tamarind drink (*tamarhindi*); mulberry juice (*tut shami*); pomegranate juice; licorice water (*suss*); very sweet Turkish coffee; very sweet tea. *Arak*, an anise-flavored liqueur, is mixed with water and commonly drunk by men with *mezze* (despite alcohol injunction).
- Restaurants and coffee houses serve mainly Syrian dishes. A few places (not international chains) serve pizza or burgers, but these are prepared Syrian style. Families eat out in large groups. In between courses at restaurants, men often smoke a water pipe with tobacco (*nargila* or *sheesha*).

Pita Bread (Khubz)

Pita bread is commonly eaten as part of the *mezze* (appetizers) and, throughout the meal, is used to dip into *hummus* or to scoop sauces and stews. It is also used

for various snacks, filled with *shawarma* or *falafel* with sliced vegetables and pickles.

½ ounce active dry yeast
1 tsp sugar
2½ cups warm water
8 cups plain flour
2 tsp salt
2½ TBS vegetable oil
1 TBS oil for oiling baking sheet

Sprinkle yeast and sugar into ¼ cup lukewarm water.
Set aside in a warm place until frothy, for about 10 minutes.
In a food processor, blend flour, yeast mixture, remaining water, salt, and 2 tablespoons oil just until the mixture forms a ball. The dough should be soft; add a bit more water to achieve this consistency.
Remove dough and knead on a floured surface until smooth and shiny (about 15 minutes).
Rub remaining oil over dough; place in a bowl, cover with a moist cloth, and set in a warm place to rise until doubled (about 2 hours).
Punch down dough. Knead again for 5 minutes.
Divide into 8 equal portions; roll each portion into a ball.
Flatten each ball with floured hands (or roll on a floured surface) into patties about ¼-inch thick and 12 inches in diameter.
Place on a floured board, cover with a floured cloth, and place in a warm spot to rise again to double in volume (30 minutes).
Preheat oven to maximum.
Lightly oil a baking sheet and preheat in oven about 10 minutes before baking.
Place bread on heated baking sheeet spaced 2 inches apart.
Bake for 5–10 minutes, or until well puffed up and light brown.
Remove from oven; wrap in a clean dry cloth.
Serve warm with any dish, or cut a slit along one side to fill with *falafel*, meat, or other filling.

Barley Broth (Tirbiyali)

This soup is traditional for breaking the fast in the evening during the month of Ramadan, when Muslims are commanded to fast during the day.

4 cups beef or chicken broth
4 TBS barley flour
1 TBS fresh lemon juice
1 egg
salt, pepper to taste

In a saucepan, heat the broth to lukewarm.
Mix barley flour, lemon, and egg, and add to warm broth, whisking constantly until broth comes to a boil.
Add salt and pepper to taste.
Serve immediately in individual bowls.

Syrian Spice Blend (Baharat)

This blend is one type (there are many regional and personal variations) used for seasoning meat pies, *kofte*, and stews.

1 TBS Near East or Aleppo pepper (or substitute 2 tsp sweet paprika and 1 tsp hot paprika)
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground coriander seeds
¼ tsp ground cloves
¼ tsp ground cumin

Mix all the ingredients thoroughly; place in a sealed jar. Use as desired. Will keep up to 3 months.

Rice with Meat and Fava Beans (Fuul Ma'ruz)

Fresh broad (*fava*) beans are a favorite. This may be served as a light meal.

¼ cup butter
1 onion, chopped
¼ tsp ground allspice
salt, pepper to taste
1 pound ground meat (lamb or beef)
1 pound fresh or frozen broad (*fava*) beans, shelled
1 cup long-grain white rice, washed and drained
3 cups boiling water
2 TBS cilantro, chopped fine

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat.
Sauté onion with allspice, salt, and pepper until golden brown.
Add meat; cook until brown.
Stir in beans, rice, and water. Bring to a boil.
Cover well and cook on lowest heat for 30 minutes, or until rice is tender but not mushy and water has evaporated.
Ladle into serving dish and sprinkle with cilantro.
Serve with plain yogurt and pita bread.

Eggplant with Tahina (Batlijan bi Tahina)

The eggplant is a much-loved vegetable for which there are many recipes. This is served as an appetizer with pita bread, or as a salad to accompany a main course.

¼ cup oil
1 large eggplant, peeled and cubed
juice of 3 lemons
4 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup onion, chopped
¼ cup *tahina* paste thinned with 2 TBS water
1 TBS parsley, minced
2 tsp salt
radishes and olives for garnish

(*continued*)

Heat oil over medium heat in a heavy skillet.
Slowly fry eggplant until golden brown and soft all over; drain on paper towels.
In a food processor, blend thoroughly eggplant, lemon juice, garlic, onion, *tahina*, parsley, and salt.
Transfer to a bowl; cover and refrigerate.
Serve cold, garnished with olives and sliced radishes.

Walnut Syrup Pastry (Batlawa)

This is a Syrian interpretation of the well-known Middle Eastern sweet *baklava*. One of Syria's major crops is sugar beets, and most of it goes into the making of intensely sweet pastries. Unlike those made elsewhere, which include honey, Syrian *batlawa* uses only sugar syrup.

Pastry

½ package filo pastry
¾ pound walnuts, ground
½ pound melted butter, cooled

Butter the bottom of a 9×13-inch pan.
Lay one sheet of filo, folded in half; brush with butter.
Lay two more filo sheets; brush with butter.
Continue until almost ⅔ of the sheets are used.
Spread an even layer of walnuts, stopping about ½ inch from the edge of the pastry.
Cover with more filo/butter layers until filo is used up.
Spread top layer with butter.
With a sharp knife, cut *batlawa* into diamonds or squares in the pan.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 25–30 minutes, or until golden brown. Let cool.
Pour syrup over *batlawa*.
Let stand for a few hours or overnight for *batlawa* to complelely absorb the syrup.

Syrup (make a day ahead)

1½ cups sugar
¾ cup water
juice of half a lemon
1 cinnamon stick

In a heavy saucepan, slowly bring all the ingredients to a boil.
Reduce heat, simmer for 15 minutes or until soft-ball stage (234–238°F).
Discard cinnamon stick before using.

Apricot Pudding (Qamar El-Deen)

This is made with the famed apricots of Damascus. *Qamar el-deen* or dried apricot sheets, sometimes called "fruit leather," are available at Middle Eastern and health/organic food stores. Serve with whipped cream or custard if desired.

1 pound *qamar el-deen* (dried apricot) sheets
2 cups hot water
½ cup cold water
¼ cup cornstarch
sugar to taste
4 dessert bowls, preferably glass
1½ cups chopped toasted almonds, walnuts, or pistachios

Soak apricot sheets in hot water for 2–3 hours or overnight; puree in a blender or food processor.
Stir cold water into cornstarch, mixing well until smooth; blend with pureed apricot.
Pour this mixture into a saucepan.
Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
Reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes or until thickened, stirring constantly to prevent lumps.
Taste to see if sugar is needed, and add accordingly.
Chill well.
Place ½ the nuts into dessert bowls; spoon apricot mixture over nuts.
Top with remaining nuts.

TAHITI

Set in the Pacific Ocean, Tahiti is the most well known and largest of the Society Islands, an archipelago of over 100 islands known as French Polynesia. First visited by the British, and made a French protectorate in the 1880s, it remains a French overseas possession (*pays outre-mer*), and Tahitians are French citizens. Fertile volcanic soil and a tropical climate are ideal for raising a wide range of fruits, vegetables, and livestock. The sea is another source of food. Foodstuffs are also imported from France, the United States, and the neighboring countries. Tahitians are predominantly Polynesian; there is a tiny minority of Europeans (French mostly), mixed, and Chinese. Tahitian cuisine, like other cuisines in Oceania, was traditionally based on the earth oven and natural foods. Contemporary Tahitian food is a blend of European (mainly French), Asian, and traditional styles, but *ma'a Tahiti* (traditional Tahitian food) remains very popular.

Foodstuffs

- Yams, rice, cassava, breadfruit, taro.
- Fish and seafood (over 300 kinds caught from open sea and coral reefs), pork, beef, chicken, eggs.
- Potato, pumpkin (including leaves) and other gourds, eggplant, cabbage and other greens (taro leaves or *fafa*, amaranth).
- Banana (many kinds), coconut, pineapple, mango, papaya, pandanus fruit, orange, watermelon, pomelo, *rambutan* (lychee relative), Tahitian chestnut (*Inocarpus edulis*), candle nut, peanut, other nuts.
- Seasonings: lime and lemon juice, coconut milk, vanilla (used for both sweet and savory dishes), fermented fish sauce (*fafaru*).

Typical Dishes

- *Poisson cru* is raw fish marinated in lime juice and dressed with coconut milk, often served as an appetizer or salad.
- Coconut milk is used extensively for cooking savory (pork, chicken, fish, vegetables) and sweet dishes (fruits). Chicken stewed in coconut milk with taro leaves.
- Roast or grilled meats: pork, chicken, fish; French-influenced steak.
- French-influenced dishes: fried potatoes (*frites*), mangoes in red wine.
- French-influenced confectionery: baguette, croissant, pastries, cakes.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Style of eating varies with type of food: traditional Tahitian food is eaten with fingers, Chinese food with chopsticks, Western food with knife and fork.
- When dining with a family, it is considered impolite to refuse an offer of food, but leaving some food on the plate shows that the diner is more than satisfied.
- Breakfast: croissant or other bread, fruit juice or coffee, jam, butter, fresh pineapple, coconut or other fruit; sweet fritters (*firi firi*) on weekends.
- Lunch: the main meal, consisting of cassava, sweet potato, taro (or other staple); roast pork, chicken, or grilled fish as main dish; pumpkin or other cooked vegetable; fresh mixed fruit salad (pineapple, avocado, melon, orange) or dessert of *po'e* (mashed fruit baked in coconut milk).
- Evening meal is light, except for special occasions or when eating out: soup, bread, boiled cassava or sweet potato, fresh fruits.
- Snacks: French-style pastries, such as croissants and cakes; coconut-milk biscuits (*kato*); to be eaten with Tahitian-style coffee (coffee, pure vanilla extract, and coconut milk); Tahitian chestnuts.
- On special occasions people have a traditional feast (*tama'ara'a*), with many foods (pork, chicken, fish, seafood, vegetables) wrapped in taro leaves and flavored with coconut milk, all baked all day long in an underground oven called *ahima'a* (see New Zealand for the box "Polynesian Earth Oven"). Food is then served on banana leaves and eaten with fingers.
- Restaurants, bars, and cafes in the capital city serve French, Chinese, other Western and Asian, and traditional local foods.
- *Roulottes* are mobile kitchens on trucks that set up in the evening in the capital city: cooked on the spot are grilled meats and fish, steak, and French fries (*frites*), French crêpes, Chinese food, pizza, and other foods.

Marinated Raw Fish (E'ia Ota; Poisson Cru)

Any marine fish or seafood can be used for this dish, but it has to be absolutely fresh. Prepare the dish as quickly as possible so that the lemon juice does not penetrate the flesh too deeply.

1 pound very fresh fish (halibut, tuna, bonito, grouper, jack), cut into thin strips
½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
salt, pepper to taste
2 garlic cloves, crushed
½ cup onions, finely chopped
½ cup carrots, peeled and julienned
½ cup red bell peppers, cored, seeded and finely shredded
½ cup coconut milk

Place fish and lime juice in a glass bowl.
Season with salt and pepper; mix to coat the fish well.
Leave to marinate for a few minutes.
Add remaining ingredients. Mix well and adjust the seasoning.
Serve immediately.

Papaya Soup (Soupe de Papaya)

This is a light soup that can be served for the evening meal with coconut bread.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped fine
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
1½ pounds green (unripe) papaya, peeled, seeded, and diced
salt, pepper to taste
6 cups water

Heat oil over medium heat; sauté onion until translucent.
Add ginger; fry for 2 minutes.
Stir in papaya, seasoning, and water; cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 15 minutes or until papaya is tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot or chilled.

Mashed Breadfruit (Uru)

Breadfruit—the fruit of a tree related to the jackfruit—is a staple food in Oceania. There are many varieties, some of which are edible raw and some only when cooked. During British colonial rule, the transportation of breadfruit seedlings to feed African slave plantation workers in the Caribbean was the cause of the mutiny on the ship *Bounty*. This is served with any meat or fish dish.

5 cups water with 1 tsp salt
1½ pounds ripe breadfruit, peeled, and cubed
1 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped fine
3 TBS coconut milk
salt, pepper to taste

Bring salted water to boil.
Add breadfruit and cook for about 10 minutes or until tender. Set aside.
Heat oil over medium heat in a frying pan; sauté onion until brown. Set aside.
Drain breadfruit; place in a large bowl and mash with coconut milk.
Stir in onion, and season to taste.
Serve hot.

Chicken with Limes (Poulet avec les Limettes)

This popular dish is often served for a main meal. Serve with a cooked vegetable dish, fried sweet potatoes, or boiled cassava.

juice and grated rind of 2 limes
salt, white pepper
2 sprigs fresh thyme
4 large boneless chicken breasts, each cut into 4 pieces
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 TBS butter
1 cup chicken stock
2 tsp sugar
1 TBS corn flour, mixed with 4 TBS water
1 cup cream or coconut milk
1 lime, thinly sliced for garnish

Prepare a marinade of half the lime juice, rind, salt, pepper, and thyme.
Place chicken in a shallow covered container; pour marinade over chicken, stirring to coat all pieces.
Marinate for 2 hours refrigerated, turning chicken several times.
Remove and drain chicken, reserving marinade.
Pat chicken dry with paper towels.
In a saucepan, heat oil and butter; cook chicken briefly on all sides.
Add reserved marinade and stock; simmer for 10 to 15 minutes.
Remove chicken and keep warm.
Cook sauce over high heat until reduced by one-third.
Reduce heat; add the remaining lime juice, and sugar and corn flour mixture; whisk until thickened.
Stir in cream; return chicken to pan; stir to mix well.
Do not allow to boil. Adjust seasoning.
Garnish the serving dish with lime slices and serve.

Pork in Coconut Milk (Porc au Lait de Coco)

This is a popular dish. Serve it with plain cooked rice, boiled sweet potatoes or bananas, and a cooked green vegetable for lunch.

2 pounds boneless pork, cubed
1 large onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 sprigs thyme
¼ tsp nutmeg
salt, pepper to taste
2 TBS oil
2 cups coconut milk
1 TBS sugar

Blend pork, onion, garlic, ginger, thyme, nutmeg, salt, and pepper.
Marinate for at least 30 minutes in a covered container, refrigerated.
Heat oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat.

(*continued*)

Brown pork on all sides.
Stir in rest of marinade, coconut milk, and sugar; simmer slowly for 1 hour, or until very tender.
Adjust seasoning.
Serve hot.

Taro Dessert (Po'e Tarua)

Po'e is a dessert often served after meals. It can be made from taro, banana, pumpkin, or sweet potato. It is different from Hawaiian *poi*, which is fermented and eaten as a savory dish. Tahitian *po'e* is traditionally wrapped in banana leaf and baked: the banana leaf imparts a subtle aroma. Given here is a contemporary method.

2 large taro corms or sweet potatoes (about 1 pound total)
2 cups fresh or canned pineapple, drained and shredded
2 cups cassava (tapioca) flour, or cornstarch
¼ cup (or more) sugar
1 TBS vanilla
3 cups coconut milk
sugar for serving
butter for greasing pan

Cook taro or sweet potato unpeeled in enough water to cover, for about 15–25 minutes, or until tender.
Drain, peel, and mash.
Blend in pineapple, tapioca flour, sugar, and vanilla.
Spread the *po'e* mixture in a buttered 8 × 8-inch baking dish.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 1 hour, or until golden brown.
Immediately pour 2 cups of coconut milk over.
Slice *po'e* and place on a serving dish or on individual plates.
Pass around remaining coconut milk and sugar for diners to spoon over.
Serve warm.

Coconut Bread (Pain Coco)

This bread is a French-Tahitian hybrid. Serve for breakfast with mango, guava, or coconut jam.

2 TBS yeast
2 cups flour
½ cup warm water
1 tsp salt
½ cup sugar, heaping
½ cup coconut milk
butter for greasing baking pan
flour for dusting baking pan

In a small bowl, sprinkle yeast and 1 tablespoon flour into warm water; set aside for 10 minutes until frothy.

In a food processor, blend salt, sugar, yeast mixture, and the remaining flour. Slowly add the coconut milk until well mixed. The dough will be quite runny.

Transfer dough to a lightly buttered bowl; cover with a clean, damp towel and let rest for 4 hours in a warm place.

Place dough into a buttered and floured 9×13×2-inch baking pan.

Let rise for 1 hour.

Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 30 minutes, or until it tests done.

Unmold and allow to cool.

TAIWAN

Located east of mainland China, Taiwan has a thriving modern economy. It was occupied by Japan from 1895–1945 and in 1949 saw the migration of two million nationalist Chinese from mainland China. Although subtropical in the lowlands, the northern mountains are cool in summer and snowy in winter. The original Taiwanese comprised several Austronesian ethnic groups, who are now a small minority. The current population is largely made up of Hakka, Fukienese and other Chinese ethnic groups. Taiwanese cuisine reflects the influence of these various groups and preserves classic cooking lost in the mainland, combined and developed with local foods.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, pork, soybean products.
- Pork, lamb, beef; duck, chicken, other poultry; many kinds of fish (flying fish for aboriginal Taiwanese), seafood (clams, oysters, shrimp, sea cucumber, jelly fish), snails, frogs.
- Western and Chinese cabbage, flowering broccoli, cauliflower, various greens, corn, bamboo shoot, bean sprouts, mushrooms, wild fungus, water chestnut, pickled vegetables (especially mustard tuber, *za tsai*).
- Pineapple, melon, Asian pear, papaya, various tropical fruits, strawberry, citrus; also imported fruits (apples, peaches, grapes).
- Seasoning: soy sauce, sesame oil, dried or fermented shrimp/fish, oyster sauce, fermented beans and bean paste, Taiwanese basil (called nine-story tower, widely used), ginger, green onions, garlic, star anise, Sichuan pepper.

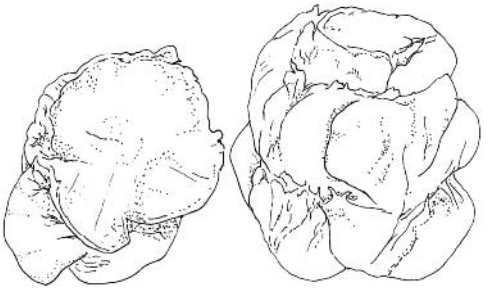
Typical Dishes

- Poultry: boiled salted duck, roast duck, marinated duck smoked over tea leaves, chicken stewed in Chinese herbs, "drunken" chicken (steamed in wine).
- Meat: beef entrails soup; mutton or lamb stewed with Chinese angelica; sausages (*da chang*); meatball-stuffed dumplings (*ba wan*, also called *rou yuan*).
- Hot pots (many types): meat, poultry, fish, bean curd, and vegetables cooked at the table and dipped in sauce.

- Fish and seafood: Japanese-influenced *sushi*, *sashimi*, miso-grilled fish, tempura (batter-fried fish and seafood); oyster omelet; raw oysters and clams.
- Rice and noodle dishes: beef noodles in soup; mutton or lamb noodles; fried noodles with oysters and squid; Hakka-style noodles with salty pickled vegetables.
- "Stinky" tofu (fermented and fried beancurd).

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals and snacks daily.
- Eating follows the Chinese standard: individual bowls of rice, eaten with chopsticks, and several communally shared side dishes from which diners help themselves with their own chopsticks.
- In general, side dishes for home eating preferably should include one dish of cooked or pickled vegetables, one of meat or poultry, and one of fish or seafood, each prepared in a different method (fried, stewed, steamed, or roasted). Banquets have a large number and variety of side dishes, often including several kinds of soup.
- Breakfast: rice and sweet potato porridge (*congee*) eaten with Chinese sausage, Japanese-style radish pickle (*takuan*), or salted duck egg; sandwiches (ham and cucumber, fried egg); tea, coffee.
- Lunch: rice, side dishes of poultry or fish and vegetables; noodles or other snacky foods (steamed dumplings); fresh fruit or sweet.
- Dinner: rice, side dishes of soup, meat, poultry or fish, and vegetables, of varied cooking styles; fresh fruit or sweet.
- Snacks (from street stalls, small diners, specialized eateries, international fast-food chains in cities): savory or sweet dumplings (*dim sum*) with tea; noodles with or without soup; gratin (baked noodles or rice with meat or vegetables topped with cheese); Japanese-influenced flavored shaved ice with sweet bean and fruit toppings; American fast foods (hot dog, hamburger); Italian pizza, pasta; aboriginal millet cake; pineapple-based pastries.
- Dessert: sliced fresh mango (or strawberries in season) or grass jelly on sweetened shaved ice; sweet bean soup (*tian tang*) with dumplings or dried longans; bean jelly and soft-boiled peanuts in syrup.
- Drinks: locally grown tea; Hakka tea (*leicha*: ground popped rice and nuts in tea); locally brewed beer; papaya, star fruit, and other tropical fruit juices and milkshakes; rice and fruit wines (especially sour plum); liquor (from millet, sorghum, and other grains); bubble tea (sweet, cold tea with tapioca balls and fruit flavorings).



MUSTARD TUBER (ZA TSAI)

Beef Noodle Soup (Niurou Mian, *also* Gu Bah Mi)

Although beef is not widely eaten, especially in Taiwan's rural communities, because cows are working animals, this soup is one of the commonest foods, and is almost a complete meal in itself, with a good serving of meat to complement

the noodles. Originating from a northern Chinese dish of wheat noodles and clear beef broth, the most commonly served is the peppery-hot Sichuan style with a dark brown broth, though most young Taiwanese prefer it less fiery. This soup can be found everywhere: at street stalls or night markets. When served in elegant hotels and restaurants, the beef is often prime tenderloin. This dish is also a specialty of some Chinese Moslem restaurants who pride themselves on their choice of good-tasting, free-range beef. The beef used for this dish must not have been frozen beforehand.

5 cups water
1 cup soy sauce
1 cup Chinese rice wine or medium-dry sherry (optional)
¼ cup packed light brown sugar
1 1-inch piece peeled fresh ginger, crushed
10 stalks green onions, white parts smashed with the flat side of a large knife and green parts chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
10 fresh cilantro stems + ½ cup loosely packed fresh cilantro sprigs (with leaves)
2 2-inch-long pieces Asian dried tangerine peel (available from Chinese stores or substitute a strip of orange or other citrus rind)
4 whole star anise
¼ tsp dried, hot red pepper flakes
2½ pounds fresh meaty beef short ribs
1¾ cups chicken broth, fat skimmed off
10 ounces dried Chinese wheat noodles or linguine
1 cup fresh mung bean sprouts
4 TBS Chinese pickled mustard greens
1 4-inch-long fresh red chili (optional), thinly sliced into rings
cheesecloth

In a 5-quart pot, bring to a boil water, soy sauce, rice wine (if using), brown sugar, ginger, white parts of green onions, garlic, cilantro stems, tangerine peel, star anise, and red pepper flakes.

Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Add short ribs; cover and gently simmer until meat is very tender but not falling apart, about 1 hour. Let meat stand in cooking liquid, uncovered, for 1 hour.

Discard bones and membranes; cut meat across the grain into ½-inch-thick slices. Set aside.

Line a sieve with cheesecloth; pour beef broth into a 3-quart saucepan. Discard solids.

Chill beef broth to solidify fat; skim fat and discard.

Add chicken broth and meat to the beef broth; reheat over low heat.

Meanwhile, cook noodles in a 6- to 8-quart pot of unsalted boiling water to al dente stage.

Drain noodles; divide among 4 large soup bowls.

Ladle broth over noodles; top with meat, remaining green onions, bean sprouts, pickled mustard greens, cilantro sprigs, and red chili rings (if using).

Note: Pickled mustard greens are a common Chinese condiment available from most Chinese stores, and have a crunchy texture.

Chafing Dish Tofu (Tie Ban Dou Fu)

Hot pot dishes are commonly eaten, especially during the winter. They range from the very spicy Sichuan type to the less fiery Taiwanese version. The hot pot is usually cooked at the table, on a traditional charcoal brazier, or in iron or fireproof ceramic vessels on modern tabletop gas burners. A fondue set is a good substitute. Various dips of soy sauce and/or thick sesame paste with cilantro are used for additional flavor to the hot foods before eating. As an appetizer, pickled vegetables can be eaten while waiting for the broth to boil at the table. Rice is not normally eaten with this.

3 TBS oil
½ pound extra-firm tofu, sliced crosswise into 1-inch-thick pieces
1 cup unsmoked bacon, sliced into thin strips
2 leeks, white part only, cut into 2-inch lengths
8 dried *shiitake* mushrooms, soaked in warm water for 20 minutes, sliced
2 cups fresh spinach, cut into 3-inch lengths
2 cups glass or cellophane noodles, soaked for 30 minutes in water, cut into 6-inch lengths

Cooking Broth

1 cup chicken stock
1 TBS soy sauce
1 tsp sugar
½ tsp miso
pepper to taste
½ TBS sesame oil

Dipping Sauce

¼ cup soy sauce
1 tsp sugar
3 TBS rice or white vinegar
1 tsp sesame oil
5 stalks fresh cilantro, chopped

Utensils

4 small bowls for sauce
4 small rice bowls or small soup bowls for eating
4 pairs chopsticks
4 chopstick rests (optional)
4 soup spoons (Chinese ceramic ones, preferably)
serving ladle(s) (one perforated, if possible)

Heat a wok at medium heat; add oil.
Lightly brown tofu slices; remove and drain on paper towels.
Next, fry the bacon until slightly crisp; remove and drain. (Do not clean wok; it will be used further.)
At the bottom of your cooking or chafing dish, place leeks in one layer.
Place tofu over leeks; spread bacon over tofu.
Add mushrooms.
Now prepare the cooking broth. In the wok, bring to a boil chicken broth, soy sauce, sugar, miso, and pepper.
Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.

(*continued*)

Off the heat, mix in sesame oil. Pour over the ingredients in cooking or chafing dish.
Arrange spinach and noodles on a plate; bring to the table.
Mix all ingredients for dipping sauce; divide into 4 small bowls; set before each diner, alongside chopsticks.
Have ready ladle(s) for scooping food from chafing dish.
Light a burner at the table. Set cooking dish on top of burner. When broth returns to boil, it is time to eat. Reduce heat so that the broth just simmers.
Diners transfer to their eating bowl no more than a few items (do not fill the bowl) using the ladle or their own chopsticks.
Using chopsticks, each diner dips one item into sauce and eats.
Spinach can be added little by little to the simmering broth by each diner as eating proceeds.
Take spinach out to eat as soon as it has wilted: do not overcook.
When all items have been eaten, add noodles to absorb the by-now-well-flavored broth.
Let noodles cook for 2–3 minutes, or until well heated through.
Diners help themselves to noodles.

Three-Cup Chicken (San Bei Ji)

This is a simple dish, typical of most Taiwanese home cooking. The 3 cups refer to one each of the flavorings used: sesame oil, rice wine, and soy sauce. This recipe reduces the amounts of these flavorings considerably though still following the original proportions. The amounts of garlic and ginger must be followed to give the desired flavor. This is best eaten with plain rice and steamed or braised vegetables.

4 portions tender, young chicken, quarters or whole legs and thighs, chopped (with the bone) into 2-inch pieces
6 cloves garlic, crushed
10 slices ginger
½ cup sesame oil
½ cup rice wine or *mirin* (Japanese cooking wine; or substitute water or chicken broth and 2 TBS sugar, but the taste will not be as good)
½ cup soy sauce
6 stalks fresh basil, chopped

Heat 3 tablespoons sesame oil in a heavy saucepan; put chicken to brown on all sides, without crowding. Set browned chicken aside.
Add garlic and ginger, frying for 2–3 minutes.
Return chicken to pan; add the remaining sesame oil, rice wine, and soy sauce. Cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to as low as possible; simmer for 20–25 minutes, turning chicken in the sauce.
Turn off heat; stir in the basil stalks.
Serve hot.

Fried Rice (Chao Fan)

This Taiwanese version of fried rice takes advantage of local pineapples. Serve this with a soup for a light lunch or snack.

5 TBS peanut oil (or other vegetable oil)
½ cup Chinese sausage, diced (available from Chinese stores)
½ cup sugar pea pods
½ cup carrots, diced
¼ cup green onions, chopped
1 tsp garlic, minced fine
1 cup pineapple chunks (fresh or canned, drained)
salt and black pepper to taste
4 cups cooked rice (cooked preferably 2–4 hours before)
¼ cup finely shredded preserved pork (also called pork floss, available from Chinese stores) and 3 TBS green onions, chopped, for garnish

Heat a wok over low heat; add 1 tablespoon oil and fry sausage for about 2–3 minutes. Remove, drain, and set aside.
Stir-fry pea pods and carrots in the same oil for about 1–2 minutes. Set aside.
Add remaining oil to wok. Quickly stir-fry green onions and garlic until fragrant.
Add pineapple, sausage, pea pods, and carrots. Stir-fry quickly over high heat.
Add rice; stir thoroughly to mix. Add seasoning to taste.
Remove from heat; pack rice firmly into a small bowl, and unmold on individual plates.
Sprinkle with shredded pork and green onions.
Serve hot.

Pineapple Tarts (Feng Li Su)

Pineapples grow well in Taiwan and are commonly used in cakes and pastries. The Hokkien (Taiwanese dialect) name for pineapple, *ong lai*, has the same sound as "prosperity come," and thus is another reason why celebrations feature pineapples in sweets and, as seen in the fried rice recipe above, in savory dishes. This recipe uses pure pineapple filling, in contrast to commercial fillings, which are mostly winter or spaghetti melon.

Filling

1 pineapple, not too ripe, about 2 pounds
1 cup sugar (or to taste)
1 TBS cornstarch

Peel pineapple, taking care to remove thoroughly all the dark spiny bits and eyes.

(*continued*)

Rinse and chop finely. (Best do this manually: a food processor results in a stringy puree.)
Drain off as much of the juice as possible (use it for juice).
Put the chopped pineapple and sugar into a microwaveable container.
Cover and microwave on high for about 10 minutes.
Stir the mixture, and microwave for another 10 minutes until very thick and solidified.
Adjust sugar to taste; stir in cornstarch.
Let cool in a covered container.

Pastry

1 cup plain flour, sifted
2 tsp cornstarch
¼ tsp salt
2 tsp confectioners' sugar
½ cup butter
1 egg yolk

In a food processor, blend flour with cornstarch, salt, and sugar.
Add butter and egg yolk; process just until it forms a ball.
With lightly floured hands, take out dough and knead lightly.
On a floured surface, roll out to about ⅛-inch thick.
Using plain, round cookie cutters about 3 inches in diameter, cut out circles for bottom crusts; use slightly smaller cutters for top crusts. (Or you may choose to have open tarts.)
Line ungreased muffin tins with crust.
Spoon filling to fill about ⅔ of the crust.
Lay the top crust and crimp, if using. For open tarts, crimp the edges of the crust with a fork.
Bake in a preheated 325°F oven for 15–18 minutes, or until a pale golden brown.
Let tarts cool in the pan for about 10 minutes before removing them with a flat spatula to a wire rack to cool completely.

TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan in Central Asia was under intermittent Russian rule from the 1860s and became independent in 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet Union. Although semiarid polar conditions prevail in the highest peaks, hot summers and mild winters enable production of grains, fruits and vegetables, and livestock on very minimal (5–6 percent) arable land. The population comprises predominantly Muslim Tajiks, with Uzbeks, Russians, and other ethnic minorities. Food in Tajikistan is influenced by Persian, Arab, Mongol, and Turkish culinary traditions.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: wheat, rice, mutton.
- Goat, chicken, egg, dairy products (yogurt, curd, or white cheese), fresh-water fish, wild game (rabbit, quail).
- Barley, corn, potato, carrot, cabbage, beans, radish, turnip, bell pepper, eggplant.
- Melon, grapes, apricot, apple, cherry, plum, quince, fig.
- Seasonings: black and red pepper (powdered chili), fenugreek, black cumin, barberry (used for its sour flavor), sesame seeds, coriander, herbs (dill, parsley, cilantro), yogurt/sour milk.

Typical Dishes

- Persian-influenced rice: one-dish mixture of rice with mutton, dried fruit, and vegetables (*plov*, also *palov*, or *osh*).
- Thick soups or stews of meat and vegetables: mutton with chickpeas and vegetables (*shurpa*); meat and peas (*nakhudshurak*).
- Grilled/roast lamb or mutton, goat (*shashlyk*).
- Noodle dish: *Laghmon* (also spelled *lagmon*), the second national dish—fresh pasta with a sauce of tomatoes and other vegetables (bell pepper, potato, carrot, cabbage, garlic, radish), topped with sour milk or yogurt.
- Sweets: *shak-shak* (honey-glazed fritters stacked into pyramids or round cakes); *pachlava* (layers of honey-drenched pastry with nuts); *sumalak* (sweet brown porridge of malted, i.e., sprouted, wheat and nuts eaten on the spring festival Navruz).

Styles of Eating

- Three main meals and snacks.
- Breakfast: salty milk tea with or without butter, flat bread (*non*), yogurt or cheese curd.
- Lunch: flat bread, stew of meat and vegetables, salad of tomatoes and/or cucumbers, fresh fruit or sweet confection.
- Evening meal: pasta with tomato sauce (*laghmon*); Chinese-influenced steamed meat-filled dumplings (*mantu*); fresh fruit or sweet confection.
- Snacks: baked meat-filled pies or pastries (triangle- or pillow-shaped), called *sambusu*, or *sambusai*; fresh fruits and nuts (grapes, melon, walnuts, almonds).
- Drinks: tea—both red (regular black tea) and green; yogurt-based drinks; fresh fruit juices; bottled soft drinks; local and imported wine; vodka. (Tajiks are predominantly Muslim, so alcohol is discouraged.)

Onion-Flavored Flat Bread (Non)

The most commonly eaten flat bread is *non*. It can be plain or flavored with a sprinkling of nigella or poppy seeds or onion. These breads are served with every meal, and are used to bring food to the mouth or for dipping into sauces. *Non* are of various shapes and sizes, ranging from the standard 6–8 inches with rounded rims, the centers stamped with various designs, to huge plate-sized *chaputti*, now only made in rural areas. These breads are best eaten fresh, as they become dry very quickly. Dry *non* are often dunked in or crumbled into hot tea to refresh them. To make them keep longer, sometimes oil is brushed over the surface once they are taken out of the clay oven (*tanur*).

1 tsp sugar
½ cup warm (not hot) water
1 TBS dry yeast
1 cup plain yogurt
1 cup water
2 cups whole-wheat flour
1 TBS salt
2 cups unbleached flour
4 TBS shallots, chopped fine
1 tsp salt

Dissolve sugar in warm water. Add yeast and stir. Allow to rest 10 minutes until frothy.
In a pot, heat yogurt and water to lukewarm, stirring occasionally.
Stir yogurt mixture into yeast mixture.
Add whole-wheat flour a cup at a time, stirring in one direction only. Stir for 1 minute to activate the gluten. Let this spongy mixture stand, covered, for 1 hour.
Sprinkle 1 tablespoon salt over sponge.
Stir in unbleached flour a cup at a time, until dough is too stiff to stir.
On a lightly floured surface, knead dough for about 10 minutes or until smooth and elastic.
Place dough into a lightly oiled bowl; cover with damp towel. Let rise in a draft-free place until doubled in volume (about 2 hours).
Preheat oven to 520°F.
Punch down dough and turn onto a lightly floured surface.

Divide into 8 equal pieces.
Roll each piece out to a 6-inch disk.
Using the bottom of a small glass, stamp a 2-inch-diameter circle at the center of the disk, without piercing it.
Sprinkle ½ teaspoon shallots, a pinch of salt, and a little water into the circle thus formed. Transfer 2–3 prepared dough disks to lightly oiled cookie sheets.
Bake for approximately 5 minutes, or until light golden.
Remove from oven; cool on a rack.
Stack and wrap loosely in a kitchen towel.
Repeat for remaining dough.
Eat warm.

Flavored Rice (Oshi Plov, Palov, Osh)

Plov is the national dish, prepared for weddings and other special occasions and on the eve before Friday (the Muslim sabbath), that is, for supper on Thursday. Although it is a rice dish, to be properly regarded as *plov*, it must have lamb or mutton. The other requirements are carrots and onions. Raisins or other dried fruits such as quinces, figs, or apricots, as well as peas, chicken, fish, eggs, and nuts may be added according to personal or regional taste. *Plov* is a communal dish, and a platter is shared among several people. It is always eaten with the hands. Communal eating etiquette demands that the diners only take rice and meat from the portion directly in front of them: helping oneself to choice bits all over the platter is frowned upon.

The oil used to prepare *plov* is traditionally mutton fat, although cotton oil, a major byproduct of Tajikistan's most significant agricultural crop, is now commonly used. By tradition, women prepare *plov* for family meals; however, specialist male *plov* chefs prepare the huge quantities needed for hundreds of guests at weddings and feasts. Serve *plov* with a salad of chopped tomatoes and cucumbers with a yogurt and herb dressing and flat bread. Green or black tea is drunk after eating.

½ cup vegetable oil or liquid mutton fat
2 onions, finely chopped
2 pounds mutton or lamb ribs with bone, or 1½ pounds boneless mutton or lamb, cubed (or beef short ribs or chicken legs and thighs)
2 carrots, peeled and sliced into thick strips
½ tsp salt
½ tsp cumin powder
4 cups boiling water
2 cups rice, washed and drained
1 cup raisins

In a large, heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onions and meat, frying for about 3–4 minutes until onions are softened.
Add carrots, salt, and cumin; fry for about 5 minutes.
Gently, to avoid oil spatters, add boiling water.
Add rice and stir; let boil for 20 minutes, uncovered.

(*continued*)

Stir rice, scraping the bottom thoroughly and mixing well; level the surface.
Turn down heat to lowest possible; add raisins on the surface of the rice.
Turn off heat; cover well and leave rice to rest for 10–15 minutes.
Mix rice well then mound up on a big serving plate.
Arrange pieces of meat on the surface of the rice, placing meat with bones (if using) upright on the rice.

Mutton and Vegetable Stew (Mastoba)

This is a dish often made for an evening meal and served accompanied by flat bread. The green herb and yogurt sauce is a frequent addition to other dishes, such as steamed dumplings (*mantu*).

1 TBS oil
2 pounds ground mutton or beef
2 onions, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 turnips, peeled and chopped
5 tomatoes, diced, or 1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
4 cups boiling water
½ cup rice, washed and drained
½ cup boiled potatoes, mashed
salt, pepper to taste
½ tsp cumin or coriander

Green Herb and Yogurt Sauce

1 cup yogurt
½ cup green onions, chopped
¼ cup mint, chopped
¼ cup cilantro, chopped
1 TBS vegetable oil
black or red (chili) pepper to taste

In a large, heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Add meat; fry until the meat changes color.
Stir in onions, carrots, and turnips, frying for 3–5 minutes until onions are softened.
Stir in tomatoes.
Add boiling water, rice, mashed potatoes, salt, and spices, stirring well.
Cover and let cook, covered over low heat, for 15–20 minutes, or until rice is done.
Mix all items for green herb and yogurt sauce; stir into stew or place in a bowl and pass around the table separately.

Tajik Salty Milk Tea (Chai)

This tea is the most common drink. It is drunk at breakfast, after meals, and at any time during the day.

2 cups water
1 tsp tea leaves
¼ tsp salt
4 cups milk
black pepper to taste
1 TBS butter

In a saucepan, bring to a boil the water, tea, and salt.
Reduce heat; add milk. Do not cover.
Heat only until the mixture comes to a boil. Turn heat off at once (or the mixture will overflow).
Add black pepper or butter as desired.
Distribute tea among 4 cups or mugs.

Tomatoes, Sour Cream, and Bread (Shakarov)

This dish is commonly eaten for breakfast, washed down with salty milk tea.

1 onion, finely chopped
1½ cups boiling water
1 cup green onions, chopped
1 cup mint, chopped
5 tomatoes, diced
2 cups sour cream
¼ tsp salt, or to taste
4 pieces freshly baked flat bread (see recipe given), cubed

Place onion in a large bowl. Pour on boiling water and let cool.
Stir in green onions, mint, tomatoes, sour cream, and salt.
Adjust seasoning as desired.
Stir in bread.
Distribute among 4 cereal bowls.
Drizzle a bit of vegetable or olive oil and, if desired, a pinch of chili pepper.

Halva (Khalvo)

This is a typical dessert made all over the country, especially for Muslim holidays and feasts. Like other desserts such as *shak-shak* (fritters glazed with honey), *khalvo* is served with green or black tea (see box "Halva").

1 cup vegetable oil
1 cup flour
warm sugar syrup (½ cup sugar and 1 cup water, heated just until sugar is completely dissolved)
1–2 cups rosewater
1 cup pistachios, finely chopped
1 cup almonds, finely chopped

In a large frying pan, heat oil over medium heat until hazy.
Stir in flour; reduce heat and keep stirring continuously until the flour turns golden, thickens, and begins to give off a fragrant aroma.
Turn off heat and let flour cool slightly.
Meanwhile, mix warm sugar syrup and 1 cup rosewater.
Add to flour, adding remaining rosewater if not enough to bind the flour.

(*continued*)

The resulting mixture must hold its shape if compressed. If not, cook over low heat for 2–3 minutes, taking care not to burn the mixture.
Press mixture into an 8×8-inch baking pan.
Scatter the chopped pistachios and almonds on top. Let cool completely.
Cut into squares or diamonds and serve.

HALVA

In the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the Near East, notably Turkey, Iran, Greece, and the Levant, *halva* refers usually to a crisp, flaky confection made of ground sesame paste (*tahina*) cooked in sugar. Pistachios, chocolate, or other foods may be added. It is commonly served in Turkey at memorial feasts to the dead. In Sufi (a widespread mystic sect of Islam) thought, *halva* represents the knowledge, love, and bounty of God, and sharing *halva* has religious implications. *Halva* was introduced to the United States by Jewish immigrants and was, for a time, considered a quintessentially "Jewish" food. In southern India, *halva* or *alvaa* refers to a sweetmeat made from semolina and dried fruit or grated carrots, drenched in syrup.

TANZANIA

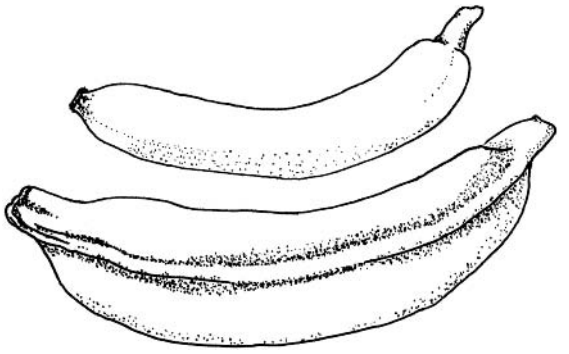
Tanzania is an East African country that lies on the Indian Ocean. A German colony from the 1880s, it became a British trust territory in 1919 and remained so until independence in 1961 (in 1964, Zanzibar [see separate entry] merged with Tanganyika to become Tanzania). The hot and humid coastal plain with cool inland plateau and high mountains (the most famous is the snow-covered Mount Kilimanjaro) favor the raising of coffee, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. Tanzanians comprise 140-odd tribal groups, divided roughly among those of Bantu and those of Nilotic (e.g., the Maasai) origin; there is a small minority of East Indian, European, and Arab communities. Tanzanian cuisine is spicy and shows influences of East Indian cooking in the use of curry powder, and Kenyan influence in grilling meat.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: maize, cassava, plantain, yam, millet, sorghum.
- Goat, beef, chicken, duck, fish, eggs.
- Potato (white and sweet), beans and other legumes, cabbage, green vegetables (leaves of cassava, amaranth, spinach).
- Banana, papaya, mango, avocado, cashew nuts.
- Seasonings: onion, chili pepper, curry powder, coconut milk.

Typical Dishes

- Staple is *ugali*, a stiff porridge made of maize, cassava, millet, or sorghum (depending on locality).
- Curried stews of beans or peas, usually with chilies.
- Vegetable stews with coconut milk, with or without meat or fish.
- Grilled meats (*nyama choma*, influenced by neighboring Kenya): usually goat; *nyama n'gombe* (beef); *nyama kuku* (chicken, more popular with tourists).
- Rice and beans.



PLANTAINS AND BANANAS

Styles of Eating

- Two to three meals and snacks daily.
- Most people in traditional households dine on the floor on a mat, sharing a central dish of *ugali* with side dishes into which the *ugali* is dipped. Alternatively, each diner will have a bowl of *ugali* flavored with a sauce or stew, eaten with a spoon or fingers. If eaten with the fingers, *ugali* is rolled into a ball with the three fingers of the right hand, dipped into the sauce, and then conveyed to the mouth.
- Daily meals comprise *ugali* eaten with a sauce or stew, commonly of vegetables, less commonly (because expensive) of meats. Or rice and beans.
- Breakfast: *ugali* and sauce, or rice and beans, banana, sweet milky tea (*chai*); urban—bread, hard-boiled egg, *chai*.
- Tea breaks at mid-morning and mid-afternoon consist of sweet milky tea, fresh fruit (banana usually), perhaps a hard-boiled egg.
- Lunch: rice or *ugali*, beans, cooked cabbage or other green vegetable (spinach, cassava leaves), fresh banana. Occasionally meat.
- Dinner: rice or *ugali*, beans, cooked green vegetable, fresh orange or papaya. Occasionally meat.
- Dessert: most frequently, fresh fruit.
- Snacks (sold on streets or homemade): sweet fritters (*mandazi*), hard-boiled egg, grilled corn on the cob, French fries (here called "chipped potatoes"), fresh fruit (papaya, banana, or mango), grilled meats.
- Drinks: fruit squash (syrup), sweet avocado drink, sweet milky tea (*chai maziwa*), carbonated bottled drinks; local Western-type beer; home-brewed banana beer, gin (*konyagi*); in some regions, fermented juice (*pombe*).

Rice Pancakes (Vitumbua)

These pancakes are accompaniments for meat stews or grilled meats. They are sometimes served for breakfast.

2 tsp yeast
1 TBS sugar
¼ cup warm water
1 cup rice flour
1 cup flour
¼ cup sugar
a pinch of salt
¼ tsp cardamom powder, or seeds of 3 cardamon pods, crushed
2 cups coconut milk
oil for frying
confectioners' or ordinary sugar for dusting

Stir yeast and sugar into warm water; keep in a warm place until frothy, for about 10 minutes.

In a food processor, blend the rest of the ingredients.

Add yeast mixture and mix thoroughly.
Add more water as necessary to achieve the consistency of thick cream.
Heat a heavy skillet; lightly brush with oil.
Pour in half a cup of batter.
Cook on one side until bubbles rise and golden underneath. Flip over and cook until golden on the other side.
Serve hot or cold.
For breakfast dust with a bit of sugar if desired.

Pigeon Peas in Coconut Milk (Mbaazi wa Nazi)

This vegetable dish is eaten with cornmeal porridge (*ugali*) or rice, almost daily. It may be accompanied by chapati, boiled bananas, or cassava for lunch or supper. Occasionally, the dish may have a bit of meat added.

1 pound dried pigeon peas (or black-eyed peas, cowpeas, navy beans), cleaned, soaked overnight, and drained (or substitute 2 16-ounce cans of any beans)
2 cups coconut milk
1 cup water
2 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
1 small green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and julienned
½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp fenugreek powder
salt to taste

Combine peas with just enough water to cover in a large pot.
Cover and bring to a boil; reduce heat.
Simmer until the peas are almost tender and most of the water is absorbed, about 20 minutes. (Omit above steps if using canned beans.)
Stir in ½ cup coconut milk.
Continue to simmer (add more water as necessary to ensure sauce is liquid).
Meanwhile, heat oil in a skillet over medium heat.
Fry the onions and bell pepper until softened.
Stir in spices and salt; fry for 1 minute.
Stir spice mixture into peas; continue to simmer until peas are tender (add water as necessary so peas do not dry out, but liquid is gradually absorbed).
Stir in remaining coconut milk; simmer on lowest possible heat for 5–10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Serve at once.

Cooked Bananas (Ndizi na Nyama)

This is served as a side dish with any main course, but particularly with roast or grilled meats.

8 green bananas or plantains, peeled and cut into disks
1 large onion, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, diced
1 cup coconut milk
2 TBS butter
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp turmeric powder

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes, or until bananas are tender.
Serve hot.

Coconut Fish Curry (Samaki wa Nazi)

This curry is commonly made along the coast and on neighboring Zanzibar. The coconut milk reflects a South Asian (Indian) influence. This is served as a main dish for lunch or supper.

2 pounds firm fish, whole or fillet (porgy, snapper, or similar)
4 TBS flour mixed with ½ tsp salt
oil for frying
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS curry powder
2 TBS tomato paste
1 or 2 red chilies (optional)
juice of 1 lemon
2 cups coconut milk
¼ cup water

Clean and rinse fish; make two slashes on the thickest part of the body if using whole fish.
Wipe dry.
Dust fish with seasoned flour.
Heat enough oil in a wide saucepan to shallow-fry the fish.
Fry until golden brown on both sides. Set aside and keep warm.
Take out all but a thin film of oil; fry onion until softened.
Stir in garlic; fry for 1 minute.
Stir in curry powder, tomato paste, chilies, and lemon juice. Cook for 1–2 minutes.
Stir in coconut milk and water; slowly bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; add fish.
Simmer gently for 15–20 minutes, carefully turning fish halfway, until sauce is thick and fish is heated through. (Stir occasionally so that sauce does not stick.)
Serve hot with boiled or fried rice.

Meat and Bulghur (Boko-Boko)

Boko-Boko is an East African variant of *harees*, an Arab dish. It is most popular among Swahili people of Arab ancestry. Serve for dinner with a vegetable side dish. The original dish is made with boneless pieces of mutton or lamb.

3 cups bulghur (cracked wheat)
6 cups (or more) water to cover bulghur
8 chicken legs including thighs (or about 1 pound mutton, cut in cubes)
10 cups water
1 cinnamon stick
½ tsp cumin powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
salt, black pepper to taste
2 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup crisp fried onions (available at Asian or Indian food stores)

Rinse bulghur, place in a bowl, cover with water and let soak for 3 hours or overnight.
Drain.
Put meat with water in a heavy saucepan; bring to a boil. Skim froth.
Reduce heat; add spices, salt, and pepper; cover and let simmer for 30 minutes.
Turn off heat.
Remove bones from meat, shred meat finely and return to pan; discard bones.
Stir in bulghur, cover tightly (adding a weight over the lid to ensure a tight fit if necessary), and reduce heat to lowest possible.
Cook for 2 hours. The bulghur should be tender; if not, add a cup of boiling water and continue cooking until bulghur is completely tender.
Stir thoroughly; taste and adjust seasoning.
Cover tightly and simmer for another 15–20 minutes.
Stir in ghee thoroughly with a wooden spoon to make a smooth porridge.
Sprinkle lemon juice over *boko-boko*.
Garnish with fried onions.

Plantain and Beef Stew (Mtori)

This is a main dish for dinner. Serve with *ugali* and boiled cassava.

1 clove garlic, minced
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and minced (optional)
2 pounds stewing beef, cubed (or 3 pounds short ribs)
2 TBS cooking oil
4 cups beef stock (or 4 boullion cubes dissolved in 4 cups hot water)
4 almost-ripe plantains or semi-ripe bananas, peeled and chunked
3 potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters
2 onions, chopped
2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
salt and black pepper to taste
1 cup coconut milk

Mix garlic and chili into a paste and rub onto the meat. Marinate for 1 hour or more, refrigerated.
Heat oil in a large pot or Dutch oven; brown the meat thoroughly on all sides.
Add stock, cover, and reduce heat.

(*continued*)

Simmer for 40–50 minutes, or until meat is tender. Replenish water if needed.
Add plantains, potatoes, onions, and tomatoes.
Continue to simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 25 minutes.
Remove meat, discard bones (if using ribs), and cut up or shred into small pieces; season with salt, pepper, and coconut milk.
Keep warm until ready to serve.
Mash vegetables well, correct seasoning.
Serve hot.

Rice and Lentils (Mseto)

This is usually made with green lentils, but red lentils make a prettier dish. Serve with any curry dish, especially fish or seafood.

2½ cups red or green lentils
2 cups rice, rinsed and drained
4 cups coconut milk
3 cups water
¼ tsp salt

Soak lentils overnight in enough water to cover.
Rinse and drain.
Blend lentils with rice in a heavy saucepan with a well-fitting lid.
Stir in thoroughly 3 cups coconut milk, water, and salt.
Cover and slowly bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to lowest possible; cover well and simmer until all the liquid is absorbed and lentils and rice are tender, for about 15–20 minutes.
Stir in remaining coconut milk; let simmer for another 2–3 minutes.
Turn off heat.
Keep warm in a warm (not hot) oven for 15–20 minutes before serving.

Vegetable Relish (Kachumbali)

Kachumbali is a relish often served with barbecued meat as well as fish dishes. Add a few (or more) drops chili sauce or 1 minced green chili pepper for an authentic spiciness.

2 red onions, finely chopped
4 tomatoes, thinly sliced
1 cucumber, peeled and sliced into julienne strips
1 carrot, sliced into julienne strips
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, sliced into julienne strips
salt, pepper to taste
juice of 1 lemon
juice of 1 lime
3 TBS fresh cilantro, chopped

Mix all ingredients thoroughly in a covered container.
Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serve with any savory dish.

Sweet Red Beans (Maharagwe)

These sweet beans can be eaten as a snack or as part of a meal. You may substitute already sweetened prepared beans in cans or bottles (usually red *azuki,* white beans, or chickpeas in syrup) available from Oriental stores, for convenience. The original recipe calls for 1 fresh minced chili. Serve this with *chapati* or other flat bread.

2 cups dry red beans or kidney beans, soaked in water overnight
4 cups water
2 cups coconut milk
2–4 TBS sugar (omit if using presweetened beans)
¼ tsp ground cardamom
a pinch of salt

Rinse and drain soaked beans; discard water.
Bring to a boil with water in a large pot.
Reduce heat; simmer until beans are nearly tender.
Add coconut milk, sugar, cardamom, and salt.
Cover and simmer until tender but not mushy, stirring occasionally.
Serve warm or cold.

Sweet Balls in Vanilla Syrup (Kaimati)

These balls reflect an Indian influence as they resemble *gulab jamun,* a popular Indian sweet. Serve these with milky tea for a snack or dessert.

2 cups flour
¼ cup unflavored yogurt
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp cardamom powder
¼ cup milk
oil for deep-frying

In a food processor, mix all the ingredients just until the dough is soft but firm enough to form into balls.
Let dough rest, covered, refrigerated for 30 minutes.
Slowly heat oil in a deep-fryer or heavy frying pan.
Shape dough into 1-inch balls.
Slide into medium-hot oil; then reduce heat.
Fry balls until golden brown, turning them to cook evenly.
Remove with a slotted spoon, and drain on paper towels.

(*continued*)

Drop into cool syrup.
Place in individual bowls with a bit of syrup, or on a large plate.

Syrup

2 cups sugar
3 cups water
1 TBS vanilla extract

Heat sugar and water over medium heat until sugar is completely dissolved.
Let cool; stir in vanilla.

THAILAND

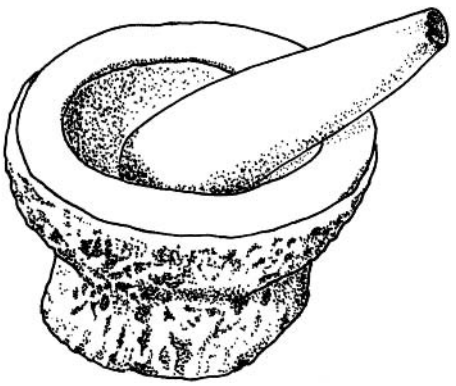
Since the thirteenth century, Thailand has been a kingdom with a culture greatly influenced by China and India. Although some provinces were lost to British rule, Thailand is the only Southeast Asian country not to have been colonized by Europe. Only 30 percent of the land, mostly in the central area, is arable; the rest is mountainous. With a tropical climate, rice, fruit, vegetables, and livestock are raised.

Thailand's population is predominantly ethnic Thai and Lao, with minority Chinese, Malays, indigenous hill tribes, and Vietnamese refugees. Most Thais are Buddhists, who profess to eating little meat. Thai Muslims (mostly living in the south) refrain from pork and alcohol. There are also Sikhs and Hindus.

Thai cuisine combines Chinese and Indian influences and is spicy, hot, and herbal. Cuisines differ according to region and ethnic group: northern is Lao influenced; southern is more fiercely hot; central is influenced by royal court taste (blending of hot, sweet, savory, salty, and bitter flavors) and aesthetic style of decoratively carved vegetables and fruits. Central cooking also borrows ideas from the rest of the country.

Foodstuffs

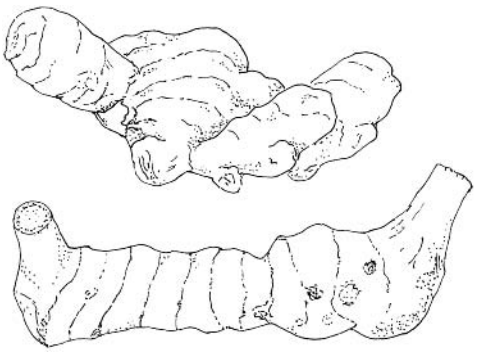
- Staples: rice, fish sauce, fish and seafood, vegetables.
- Pork (not for Muslims), beef, preserved meats (salted meat, sausages), wild game, fish, seafood, chicken, duck, eggs.
- Bamboo shoot, eggplant, bitter melon, water spinach, bean sprouts, winged bean, baby corn, mushrooms, green vegetables.
- Mango, papaya, durian, jackfruit, banana, exotic tropical fruit (lychee, rambutan).
- Seasonings: curry spices (turmeric, coriander, cumin, etc.), fish sauce, Thai basil, cilantro, lemon grass, Kaffir lime leaf, ginger.



STONE MORTAR AND PESTLE

Typical Dishes

- Curries of chicken, beef, or fish and seafood: green, red, yellow, or Massaman (Muslim).



GALANGAL (BOTTOM) AND GINGER (TOP)

- Sour and spicy soups of seafood, fish, or chicken.
- Noodles with or without soup, with chicken, seafood, soybean curd, and vegetables: *pad thai*, *kao soi*, *guaitiao*.
- Malay-influenced skewered grilled meat (*satay*).
- Marinated and grilled chicken (*gai yang*).
- Fresh vegetable dishes: Lao-influenced sour salad with meat (*larb*), unripe papaya salad.
- Drinks: fruit juices, iced condensed milk with red fruit syrup (*num yen*), pandanus- and other fruit-flavored drinks, coconut water, basil seed drink, locally brewed beer, bottled softdrinks, iced tea, coffee.

Styles of Eating

- Three (often more) meals and snacks daily.
- Northern meals, eaten from individual trays, consist of glutinous rice in a basket, and side dishes in small bowls around it.
- Central Thai family meals were traditionally shared from a central plate. Nowadays, individual place settings with spoons and forks are common. The spoon conveys food to the mouth; the fork pushes food onto the spoon.
- Breakfast: rice soup (*congee*); fried dough stick; coffee or tea.
- Lunch: noodles; one-dish meal of chicken curry and rice or fried meat and rice.
- Dinner: Central Thai—rice; sour spicy soup (*tom yam goong*); fried or roast meat; curried vegetable; steamed shrimps; water to drink. North—glutinous or sticky rice; chili soup; grilled pork, beef, or chicken; steamed vegetables with savory flavoring, that is, no sweet or sour tastes. Seafood not commonly eaten because of the distance from the sea. Water to drink.
- Snacks (mostly eaten at street or hawker stalls, or bought to take home): savory pancakes (*khanom buang*) stuffed with various fillings such as coconut and dried shrimp; coconut mini-cupcakes (*khanom krok*); noodles; sweet rice cakes; savory steamed fish in banana leaf (*hor mok*); fresh ripe or unripe fruit (the latter eaten with fish sauce and chili pepper).
- There are many types of eating venues, from street hawkers to elegant restaurants.

Chicken Curry (Gaeng Gari Gai)

The traditional way of making curry is by pounding thoroughly all the spices and herbs together in a mortar and pestle. Most families today use commercial yellow curry paste to shorten this process. This dish is served with rice for a one-dish midday meal, or with vegetables and other side dishes for dinner.

2 cups coconut milk
2 TBS Thai yellow curry paste (available from Asian stores)
4 portions chicken thighs and legs (about 3 pounds)
2 cups chicken stock
4 TBS fish sauce (*nampla*)
1 TBS sugar
1 tsp salt
2 medium potatoes, cubed

2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into strips
4 TBS roast, skinned, ground peanuts
5–7 stalks Thai basil
½ tsp ground red chili pepper (or to taste)

In a heavy, covered saucepan, bring the coconut milk to a boil over medium heat.
Stir in the curry paste, mixing well.
Add chicken and potatoes; cover the pan.
When the mixture returns to a boil, add stock, fish sauce, sugar, and salt.
Simmer for 30–40 minutes until chicken and potatoes are tender.
Ten minutes before the end of cooking, add bell peppers, peanuts, basil, and chili.
Serve hot over rice.

Chiang Mai–Style Curry Noodles (Kao Soi)

This dish is from northern Thailand, where Chinese (use of noodles and chopsticks) and other non-Thai influences are strong. A snack or light lunch dish, this is usually eaten using chopsticks and has become popular throughout the country.

2 cups coconut milk
2 TBS *phom kari* (Thai yellow curry powder, available from Asian stores; or substitute ordinary curry powder)
2 TBS red curry paste (if not available, substitute yellow curry powder plus 2 tsp paprika)
3 TBS chopped garlic
4 cups stock
½ tsp turmeric powder
5 TBS *nampla* (fish sauce)
a pinch of sugar
1 pound ground pork
3 quarts water
2 pounds fresh *bamee* noodles (medium flat yellow egg noodles, available at Asian stores. If fresh unavailable, soak 4 portions of dried egg noodles, 4 ounces each, in water for 15 minutes. Drain.)
juice of 1 lime

Garnish

4 TBS green onions
5 shallots, or 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
4 TBS Thai pickled cabbage (*phak kaat dong*; or substitute Chinese pickled mustard leaves, otherwise omit)
1 lime, cut into wedges

Prepare the sauce: in a heavy saucepan, mix coconut milk and curry pastes over medium heat; cook until fragrant, and oil separates, stirring frequently.
Stir in garlic, and increase heat to high.

(*continued*)

Stir in stock, turmeric, fish sauce, and sugar; cook until sauce thickens slightly.
Stir in pork and cook thoroughly; adjust seasoning, and keep hot.
Prepare the noodles: put water to boil in a large pot.
Put 1 portion of noodles (¼ pound) in a strainer or colander.
Into boiling water, dip noodles for 10 seconds (until thoroughly heated through), drain well, and transfer to a deep soup bowl.
Repeat for remaining noodles.
Pour sauce over noodles.
Add garnishes as desired; squeeze lime juice into soup and eat.

Hot and Sour Soup with Prawns (Tom Yam Goong)

This is a classic dish that brings together the characteristic herbal flavors of Thai cooking. Although customarily served at the same time as other dishes with rice for an evening meal, this can also be served as a soup on its own.

6 cups water
3-inch piece galangal (a ginger relative; if not available, substitute ginger)
1 TBS *nam prik pao* (dipping sauce, a mix of chilies and fermented shrimp, available from Asian stores; omit if unavailable)
3-inch stalk lemon grass, chopped into three, coarse leaves discarded
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 tomato, sliced into wedges
8 large champignon mushrooms, cleaned and quartered
½ pound fresh or frozen shrimp, peeled and deveined
juice from 2 limes
5 TBS *nampla* (fish sauce), or to taste
5–7 stalks fresh Thai basil leaves
5 stalks green onion, chopped
½ tsp ground red chili, or to taste

In a pot, bring to a boil water, galangal, *nam prik pao*, and lemon grass.
After 2–3 minutes, add onion, tomato, mushrooms, and shrimp.
When the shrimp have turned color (after 2–3 minutes), turn off heat. Transfer soup to tureen or large serving bowl.
Mix lime juice and fish sauce; stir into soup.
Garnish with basil and green onions.
Season to taste with added fish sauce and red chili.
Serve hot.

Vegetables in Coconut Milk (Paak Tom Kati)

Thai cooking uses many varieties of eggplants: there are the usual slender ones, about 6–8 inches long; round ones the size of cherry tomatoes; and even smaller ones called *makheua phuang*, which resemble crunchy garden peas. These

tiny eggplants are rather bitter, so substitute tender garden peas, raw. If you can only get frozen peas, use them defrosted without further cooking.

The original recipe also calls for yard-long beans (here substituted with Western green beans) and swamp cabbage (for which spinach has been substituted). Serve this together with a meat dish and rice for dinner.

1 cup coconut milk
1 tsp sugar
1 TBS light soy sauce
1 TBS kaffir lime leaves, shredded (or 1 tsp lime rind)
2 TBS red onions, minced
1 TBS green peppercorns, or ¼ tsp freshly ground pepper
½ cup pea-sized Thai eggplants (or fresh, large garden peas; or frozen peas, defrosted)
1 cup green beans, cut into 2-inch lengths
1 cup mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
1 cup spinach, shredded
1 cup Chinese cabbage, shredded
1 TBS bird's-eye chilies, sliced fine (optional)

In a pan over low heat, bring to a simmer coconut milk, sugar, soy sauce, and lime leaves.
Add onions and pepper; continue to gently simmer for 1–2 minutes until fragrant.
Add vegetables, and increase heat to medium.
When mixture boils, reduce heat and simmer gently until just cooked, for about 5–7 minutes.
If using defrosted frozen peas, stir in only as soon as heat is turned off.
Serve with rice.

Water Chestnut Rubies (Tab Tim Grob)

The fanciful name of this dessert comes from the color imparted by beetroot. Other desserts are based on sticky rice or coconut.

1 cup water chestnuts, diced small
1 beetroot, chopped and soaked in 2 cups water to obtain color (or 3–4 drops red food dye, dissolved in sufficient water to cover chestnuts)
½ cup sugar
¾ cup jasmine essence water (available from Asian stores)
½ cup tapioca flour
1 quart or more water for boiling
1 quart very cold water
¾ cup coconut milk
crushed ice

Soak water chestnuts in beet water or red food coloring.
Meanwhile, make a light syrup by boiling sugar and jasmine essence water just until sugar is dissolved. Refrigerate when it has cooled to room temperature.
Drain water chestnuts, then dredge in flour, making sure all are well coated.
Bring a quart of water to a boil; add water chestnuts.

(*continued*)

Simmer briskly until they float. Immediately scoop out with slotted spoon, drain, and plunge into cold water.
Divide water chestnuts among 4 small glass or dessert bowls.
Divide syrup and coconut milk among the 4 dishes.
Add ice and serve at once.

TIBET

Currently governed by China, traditional Tibet was ruled by a system of large lamaseries (monastries) that controlled religious and secular life. The seniormost lama is the Dalai Lama, from Lhasa, now in exile with many Tibetans in India. Located with most of the Himalayan mountains in the world's highest region, Tibet is mostly very cold and dry. With limited arable land, traditional crops were cold-resistant cereals such as wheat and barley and some root vegetables. Nowadays, more fruits and vegetables are being grown in greenhouses or are imported from neighboring China. In southern and eastern regions, some temperate and subtropical crops are grown. Tibetans are originally nomadic, and herded livestock or farmed.

The population is predominantly ethnic Tibetans, with several minority groups including Mongols, Menga, Hui, and immigrant Han Chinese. Although Tibetans are largely Buddhist, there are some Muslim communities. Since Buddhism forbids needless killing, Tibetan monasteries developed a vegetarian cuisine, and many dishes have meat and nonmeat variations. Traditional Tibetan cuisine is based on flat bread or noodles (rice in the south and east), dairy products, mutton, and minimal vegetables, similar to that of Mongolia, but Indian-influenced curries and Chinese-influenced dishes are now eaten.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: flat bread, noodles, tea.
- Barley, wheat, rice, corn, millet, buckwheat, sorghum.
- Beef, mutton, goat, yak, wild game, dried meat (beef, mutton), sausages (blood, liver, meat); yogurt, cheese, buttermilk; in the past few decades under the influence of Han Chinese, there has been a limited use of imported foods (seafood, chicken, duck, pork, eggs, fish).
- Potato, radish (daikon), turnip, pea, watercress, bamboo shoot, green vegetables, wild vegetables (mushrooms, ferns, young plant shoots); modern: cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, tomato, cabbage.
- Melon, grapes, citrus, apple, pear, apricot, walnut, gooseberry, various berries, banana.
- Seasonings: chili, onion, *emma* (a type of Sichuan pepper), curry spices (coriander, cumin, turmeric), *tsal* (a table condiment of chopped tomatoes, coriander, green onions, and garlic).

Typical Dishes

- Flat bread (many types, depending on region), steamed bread (*ting mo*).
- Curried stews of vegetables with or without meat: shamday (also spelled shamdhe).
- Soups: cheese (*churu*), sheep blood.
- Stir-fried meat with vegetables: *khatsa*.
- Filled dumplings with or without meat: *momo* (steamed), *kothe* (fried).
- Noodle dishes with vegetables and meat: *thentuk* (pulled noodles with vegetables), *thukpa* (noodles with soup), *gutse ritu* (hand-made pasta in lamb broth and cheese).
- Grilled, roasted or barbecued meat: fresh or dried mutton or beef, sausages, innards (tripe).
- Vegetable dishes: stir-fried vegetables and mushrooms (*tzel sesha*), vegetables rolled in crepe (*phing alla*).
- Drinks: buttered tea, milk tea, locally brewed barley wine and beer (*chang*), soft drinks (in towns, cities), imported international beer.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily (or whenever hungry, more during busy working season).
- People eat from individual bowls, often with fingers and spoons.
- Breakfast: tea, roasted barley flour (*tsampa* or *zanba*), milk curds.
- Lunch: *tsampa*, sour milk, meat broth or meat; stew or soup.
- Supper: porridge, noodles, curried vegetables with or without meat.
- Snacks: sweet fritters, buttered tea.
- Desserts: cheese- or yogurt-based sweets: *bhaktsa makhu*, sweet *cannelloni* rolled in brown sugar with grated cheese; rice pudding with raisins and yogurt (*dey-see*); fresh sliced fruit.
- Tea is drunk all the time: morning, noon, evening, before bed.
- With the spread of tourism, cities have cafes and restaurants serving Western-style food (hamburger, hot dog, pizza, pasta) and Chinese-style food (Sichuan or Guangdong style).

Barley Flour Paste (Tsampa)

Tsampa (also spelled *zanba*) is the staple of Tibetan nomads. It is used as a trail food, and many nomads will carry a bag with a lump of *tsampa* and another of aged yak butter or curd. There are two main ways of preparing and eating the *tsampa*. One is to make a *tsampa* paste or dough with butter tea; the other is to make a porridge (actually a thick soup) with beef or mutton and vegetables such as radish or turnip. The *tsampa* porridge is then known as *tu-pa* (also *tubo*) and can be eaten at any meal: breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

2 cups roasted barley flour (quickly roast barley grains in a wok until fragrant, not burned, then process or blend as fine as possible in a blender or food processor)
4 cups butter tea

In a bowl, put barley flour and gradually stir in tea to make a thick paste.
The paste must be thick enough to be scooped to the mouth with two fingers.

Butter Tea (Po Cha, Bo Cha)

In the harsh environment of Tibet, meals and dishes are intended to supply quick energy and warmth; none more so than the ever-present tea, which, because it is salty, is more akin to a soup. Tibetan tea comes in compressed blocks or bricks, a bit of which is crumbled off to boil for several hours as a tea "concentrate," to which boiled water is added when preparing tea for drinking. Ordinary black tea leaves or tea bags are fine to use. The quantity given is for 4 generous mugs of tea.

8 cups water
4 TBS black tea leaves or 5 tea bags
1 cup half-and-half (half cream, half milk), or full-fat milk
3 TBS butter
⅓ tsp salt (or to taste)

In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil over high heat.
Turn down heat to lowest possible until water is just simmering.
Add tea and bring water slowly back to the boil.
Let boil for 2–3 minutes; turn off heat.
Strain tea leaves or take out tea bags.
Stir in butter, half-and-half or milk, and salt.
Whisk the mixture briskly (or, alternatively, transfer to a blender or food processor and blend for 2–3 minutes).
Serve at once or use to make *tsampa* paste (see recipe above).

Cheese Soup (Churu)

This soup is popularly eaten with *tsampa* for breakfast. The blue cheese substitutes for well-flavored local cheese. If desired, any highly flavored cheese can be substituted, such as parmesan. This can also be eaten with bread.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped fine
½ tsp Sichuan pepper
½ tsp paprika
3 cloves garlic, minced
1-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
½ pound ground beef or chicken (or other meat)
1 red chili, cored, seeded, finely chopped (optional)
4 TBS blue cheese
1 large tomato, diced
6 cups water
⅓ cup cornstarch mixed with ½ cup water

(*continued*)

In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in onion and fry until brown.
Add Sichuan pepper, paprika, garlic, ginger, and beef; stir-fry until meat is brown.
Add chili if using.
Reduce heat to lowest possible; stir in cheese until melted.
Add tomato and water; let come to a boil.
Stir in cornstarch slurry; cook until mixture thickens.
Serve hot.

Tibetan Curry Spice Mix (Garam Masala)

Tibetan *garam masala* mixes tend to be sweeter than their Indian and Nepali counterparts. These spice mixes are often used to perfume the air as incense, an important part of Lamaist Buddhist rituals.

½ tsp coriander seeds
¼ tsp cumin seeds
1 2-inch piece cinnamon stick
5 whole cloves
¼ tsp black cardamom seeds, crushed (discard pods, use only inner black seeds; omit if unavailable)
¼ tsp green cardamom seeds, crushed (discard pods, use only inner black seeds)
¼ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
¼ tsp freshly grated black pepper

In a skillet over low heat, slowly dry-roast coriander, cumin, cinnamon, and cloves for 2–3 minutes or until aromatic, stirring constantly.
Put together with remaining spices in a food processor or blender; process in quick bursts until finely ground.
Store in a well-sealed jar for use.

Steamed Filled Dumplings (Momo)

*Momo*s are a staple in Tibet, usually filled with yak meat for those who can afford it, or mushrooms and soybean curd or other vegetables for vegetarians. Any kind of ground meat—beef, chicken, or turkey—can be substituted. Lama-series (monasteries) tend to serve only vegetarian stuffing. To eat, hold a *momo* by the crown and dip into a soy-based sauce or tomato-based *tzal* sauce (see recipe below). When fried, these dumplings are called *kothe*. *Momo*s are eaten during family gatherings and other social occasions, as one needs many hands to help wrap the dumplings. They are now also served at all times in restaurants that cater to foreign visitors.

3 cups flour
¾–1 cup water

In a bowl, place flour; gradually stir in water to make a dough (you may not need more than ¾ cup water).
Knead for 20–30 minutes (the longer, the better) until smooth and elastic.
Form into a ball. Let rest, covered with a moist towel for at least 30 minutes.
Divide dough into 12 pieces; continue to cover with damp towel those not being worked on.
On a floured surface, roll each piece out into a ⅛-inch-thick disk.
Place a disk on the palm of your hand.
Place a spoonful of filling in the middle of the disk.
Bring edges firmly together over the filling to form a crescent or half-moon.
You can further seal the seam by crimping with a fork. This ensures none of the filling leaks out during steaming.
(Or you can decorate the sealed seam with pleats. Starting from one pointed tip of the crescent, make 4–6 pleats, crimping and folding until you reach the other pointed tip.)
Place finished *momo*s on a floured tray or wax paper and cover with a damp towel.
Repeat with the rest of the dough pieces.
Lightly oil a bamboo or metal steamer and place *momo*s, leaving a ½ -inch space around each to avoid crowding.
Steam for 30 minutes or until filling is completely cooked (test one to be sure).
Serve hot with your choice of dipping sauce.

Meat Filling

1 pound ground meat (beef, chicken, or turkey)
1 onion, chopped fine
½ head small cabbage, cored, tough ribs discarded, and finely shredded
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 stalks green onion, chopped
½ cup cilantro, chopped
½ tsp salt

Mix all ingredients well, and allow to rest for 30 minutes for flavors to develop.

Cabbage Filling

2 TBS butter
1½ pounds Chinese cabbage, chopped
3 green onions, chopped fine
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 block firm soybean curd (tofu), cubed
salt and black pepper to taste

Heat butter over low heat in a wok; stir-fry cabbage for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in thoroughly green onions, ginger, and garlic.
Carefully mix in bean curd.
Season to taste.

(*continued*)

Potato, Mushroom, and Cheese Filling

1 pound potatoes, peeled and shredded
3 TBS melted butter
2 onions, chopped fine
1 cup *shiitake* or other mushrooms, soaked in warm water for 20 minutes (if dry) and chopped fine
1 cup grated hard cheese (parmesan)
1 cup cilantro, chopped
salt, paprika, and black pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients well.

Dipping Sauce

1 TBS soy sauce
1 TBS vinegar
1 TBS chili oil
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated

Combine all ingredients.

Tomato Dipping Sauce (Tsal)

1 tomato, quartered
½ cup cilantro leaves
3 green onions, white and green parts
3 cloves garlic, crushed
salt and chili oil to taste

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor until finely chopped.

Mixed Vegetable Stew (Shamday, Shamdhe)

This stew uses a mix of locally available meat (here beef substitutes for the more common yak meat), cold-hardy root vegetables (potatoes, carrots, turnips), Indian spices (turmeric, coriander, cumin), and Chinese ingredients (sesame oil, seaweed). Serve with plain white rice or flat or steamed bread for an evening meal.

3 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
½ tsp ground turmeric
¼ tsp cumin
¼ tsp coriander
½ tsp salt
1 pound stewing beef, cubed (or 2 blocks firm soybean curd [for vegetarians], cubed)
3 potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 carrots or 2 turnips, peeled and cubed
1 small packet (about 4 ounces) glass or cellophane noodles, soaked in cold water for 20 minutes, drained and cut into 4-inch lengths
½ cup dried seaweed, soaked in cold water for 20 minutes, drained (or substitute one 12-inch piece *wakame*, dried Japanese seaweed, available from Oriental stores; omit if unavailable)
1 tsp sesame oil
1 tomato, chopped

In a deep saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; stir in onion, garlic, and ginger and fry until onion is soft.
Stir in turmeric, cumin, coriander, and salt.
Add meat, potatoes, carrots or turnips; stir thoroughly.
Add 2 cups water, cover, and let come to a boil.
Reduce heat to the lowest possible and simmer for 30–40 minutes until meat and vegetables are tender.
Add noodles and seaweed; let simmer for 5 minutes.
Adjust seasoning to taste; stir in sesame oil and tomato.
Serve hot.

Rice Pudding (Desi, Deysee)

This is a popular dessert using what used to be a luxury item for the majority of Tibetans. Rice was grown only in the south and southeast or elsewhere, and traditionally eaten only by aristocrats and monks. In Tibet, pieces of the root of the wild potentilla, called *drolma*, are typical additions to this rice pudding. A substitute is diced, cooked (not too soft) sweet potato.

4 cups water
2 cups long- or short-grain white rice
¼ cup butter
¼ cup yellow raisins (sultanas), washed and drained
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup *drolma* (or diced, cooked sweet potato)
½ cup sour cream or yogurt

In a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid, combine water and rice.
Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
Reduce heat to lowest possible; cover and simmer, covered, until rice is tender, for about 20–25 minutes. Turn off heat.
Stir in butter, raisins, sugar, and sweet potato.
Serve warm with a dollop of sour cream or yogurt.

TOGO

Togo is a West African country on the Bight of Benin. Explored by the Portuguese, Togo became a German, then a French, colony until independence in 1960. The topography is rolling savanna and coastal plains with a tropical climate for raising coffee, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. The population comprises mainly Ewe and Kabyé, with several other ethnic groups. Togolese cuisine has been influenced by France, as well as neighboring Ghana and Benin. German influence is evident in local beers. Togolese cooks are famous throughout the region.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: yam, cornmeal.
- Cassava, corn, rice, millet, sorghum.
- Chicken, fish, beef, wild game.
- Beans, taro, pumpkin, okra, eggplant.
- Banana, mango, coconut, oranges.
- Seasonings: tomato, onion, peanut, chili peppers, palm nut oil.

Typical Dishes

- Stiff porridge (*fufu*, *pâte*) of yam, cornmeal, or a mix of tubers and grains.
- Smoked goat meat.
- Stews or sauces with meat: chicken, goat, beef, blood, wild game.
- Green vegetable sauces/stews: baobab, spinach, okra (*soupe de gombo*).
- Portuguese-influenced bean stew: *fechouada*.
- Peanut-flavored sauces/stews.
- Bean fritters: *abobo*.
- Ghanaian-influenced rice and black-eyed peas (beans) with palm nut oil: *watchi*.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Families usually eat together. The fingers of the right hand are used.
- Breakfast: cornmeal/yam porridge (*pâte*), white bean sauce; urban—baguette, omelet, tea.

- Lunch: *pâte*, green vegetable (baobab leaf) sauce.
- Dinner: *pâte*, peanut sauce with a bit of chicken, banana.
- Snacks: fritters, corn on the cob, roasted peanuts, grilled skewered meats, snails.
- Sweets: banana fritters (*klako*), fruit yogurts, ice cream.
- Drinks: fruit juices, coffee, tea, German-style beers and ales, locally brewed millet beer (*tchoukoutou*), bottled carbonated drinks.

Cassava and Egg (Gari Foto)

This dish is a variant of a Ghanaian recipe of the same name. It is often served for breakfast or supper.

4 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
1 large peeled tomato, chopped fine
1¼ cups tomato paste
salt, pepper
5 eggs, beaten
½ cup water
2 cups *gari* (fermented cassava flour, available from African stores; or substitute toasted cassava flour called *farofa*, available from Brazilian stores)

In a frying pan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat; fry onions until softened.
Stir in tomato, tomato paste, salt, and pepper.
Reduce heat; add 2 beaten eggs.
Cook for 3–4 minutes, stirring until eggs are done. Set aside.
Place *gari* in a large bowl, and slowly add water, stirring well.
Blend egg sauce with the dampened gari.
Make an omelet: to the remaining eggs, add salt and pepper to taste.
Heat the remaining oil in a frying pan, add the eggs and cook until set and golden underneath.
Turn over and cook the other side until pale golden.
Place the omelet over gari and sauce.
Serve at once.

Groundnut Stew with Chicken

This is served with cornmeal or yam porridge for dinner. Mashed white or sweet potato (or a mixture) would make a good substitute for the yam porridge. This can be made without chicken, in which case add another onion or two, as well as a couple more bell peppers.

4 chicken thighs and legs, breasts, or quarters (about 3 pounds)
salt, pepper to taste
2 TBS vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped

(*continued*)

2 fresh tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 cups hot water
1 cup natural (unsweetened) peanut butter
½ cup tomato paste
1 bouillon cube, crushed
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced into strips
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced into strips

Season chicken with salt and pepper.
Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat; brown chicken all over. Remove and set aside.
Add onion. Stir-fry until softened.
Stir in tomatoes; fry, stirring until softened.
Add water and bring to a simmer. Take 2–3 tablespoons of the hot liquid and blend in a small bowl with peanut butter and tomato paste until smooth. Return mix to pan and stir in.
Reduce heat; add chicken pieces and bouillon cube.
Simmer until chicken is tender, for 40–50 minutes.
Stir gently from time to time to prevent sticking. Add a bit of water if sauce is too thick.
Ten minutes before chicken is ready, stir in bell peppers.
Serve hot.

Seafood, Beef, and Vegetable Sauce

Most sauces or side dishes served with cornmeal or yam porridge are based on vegetables, particularly greens, and beans or other legumes. This sauce can be made solely with spinach, in which case increase the quantity of spinach to 6 cups. Alternatives to spinach are cabbage, white or navy beans, black-eyed peas, or kidney beans. Meat is not an everyday addition to side dishes, but is reserved for special occasions or when there are guests. For southern Togolese, combining seafood and meat with vegetables is a common cooking method. Serve this for dinner with fried sweet potatoes, cornmeal porridge, or rice.

3 TBS cooking oil, preferably peanut
1 pound beef, cut into small cubes
1 onion, chopped
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1½ cups water
½ pound prawns, cooked, shelled, and deveined
½ pound canned crabmeat (or imitation crab legs)
4 tomatoes, peeled and diced
¼ tsp crushed red pepper
2 TBS flour mixed with 2 TBS water
2 cups frozen chopped spinach, defrosted, squeezed lightly to extract moisture
¼ tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 onion, sliced

Heat oil over medium heat in a saucepan; brown meat.
Stir in onion and fry until softened, for about 10 minutes.

Add salt, pepper, and water; cover and simmer until meat is tender, for about 25–30 minutes.
Add prawns, crab, tomatoes, and red pepper.
Simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Stir in flour mixture.
Add spinach, ginger, and sliced onion.
Cover and simmer for 5–8 minutes, or until onion is softened.
Serve immediately.

Roast Chicken with Djenkoumé (Poulet Djenkoumé)

This dish is for dinner, accompanied by a green salad and fried sweet potatoes, and is prepared in the same manner as French fries. *Djenkoumé* refers to a mix of cornmeal, tomato, and red palm oil.

1 cube bouillon
2 onions, chopped fine
3 TBS fresh ginger, grated
4 cloves garlic, minced
salt, pepper to taste
5 TBS oil, preferably palm oil
4 large chicken portions with bone (about 2–3 pounds)
2 cups canned chopped tomatoes
3 TBS tomato paste
4 cups chicken stock
2 cups cornmeal
1 tomato, quartered, for garnish
1 small onion, sliced thin, for garnish

Crush bouillon cube and mix with onions, ginger, garlic, salt, pepper and 2 tablespoons oil.
Rub half of the spice mixture all over chicken pieces; set aside for 20 minutes.
Put chicken to roast in a preheated 375°F oven for 30–45 minutes, or until golden brown.
Meanwhile prepare the tomato sauce.
In a heavy saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat.
Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, and remaining half of the spice mixture; simmer for 15 minutes or until thick.
Set aside half of this tomato sauce.
Prepare the *djenkoumé*: mix remaining tomato sauce with chicken stock; simmer for 20 minutes.
Sprinkle cornmeal onto simmering sauce; cook, stirring constantly until thickened, for about 10 minutes.
Remove from heat; spoon into 4 ramekins, lightly oiled with remaining oil.
Place roast chicken in 4 warmed plates; unmold 1 ramekin of cornmeal-tomato "cake" alongside each piece of chicken.
Spoon reserved tomato sauce beside chicken.
Garnish with slices of tomato and onion.
Serve immediately.

Grilled Plantain

This is a popular street food that is also good with any meal. It can be made on a barbecue.

4 plantains (or green bananas), peeled and cut into chunks
bamboo skewers, soaked for 20 minutes in water
salt to taste
½ tsp cayenne pepper

Thread several plantain chunks through their rounded sides onto two parallel bamboo skewers (this configuration helps in turning them over during grilling).
Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Grill until tender over a charcoal fire (or broil for 6–8 minutes under grill), turning as one side browns.
Serve hot.

Sweet Cassava Dessert (Gari Dossi)

This is a conveniently made dessert and snack from the plentiful local ingredients.

2 cups *gari* (or substitute toasted cassava flour from Brazilian stores)
1 cup (or more) milk
¼ cup brown sugar or honey
1½ cups chopped roasted peanuts or grated coconut, or a mix of both

Place ½ cup *gari* per person into dessert bowls.
Add enough milk to cover.
Add 2 tablespoons sugar or honey.
Sprinkle nuts or coconut, or both.

TONGA

Tonga is an archipelago of 170 islands in the South Pacific Ocean, thirty-six of which are inhabited, formerly known as "The Friendly Islands." The only monarchy in the Pacific, it was originally settled by the Polynesian-speaking Lapita people and explored by the Dutch and British (Captain Cook). Tonga was a British protectorate from 1900 until independence in 1970. Only 25 percent of the land is arable, but with a tropical climate, a range of crops are grown, the most notable being vanilla. The majority of the people are Polynesian, with a few Europeans and Chinese. Traditional Tongan cooking involved roasting over a fire or baking in an underground oven.

Foodstuffs

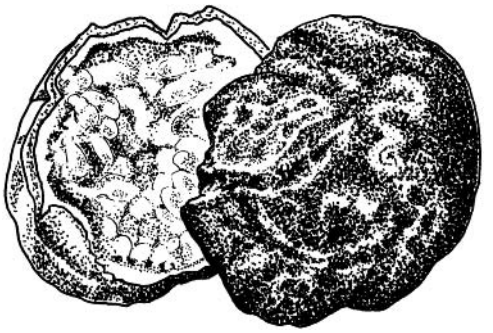
- Staples: taro, yam, cassava, sweet potato, plantain, breadfruit; contemporary: macaroni, white potato, instant noodles (*saimin*).
- Fish, seafood, pork, chicken, beef, eggs; contemporary: canned corned beef, frozen mutton, turkey.
- Pumpkin and other gourds, tomato, bell pepper, carrot, spinach, cabbage, avocado, onion.
- Lemon, lime, papaya, mango, pineapple, watermelon, orange, guava, coconut, nuts, passion fruit, grapefruit.
- Seasonings: tomato, onion, coconut milk, pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Roast pig on a spit for special occasions.
- Taro- or banana-leaf-wrapped dishes, baked in an earth oven (*umu*): *lu pulu* (corned beef packets).
- Stews of fish or meat in coconut milk.
- Vegetables usually boiled, steamed, or baked, often with coconut milk.
- Sweets cooked in coconut milk.

Styles of Eating

- Two meals a day (breakfast and evening meal) and snacks.
- Families eat meals together. On the outer islands, diners sit on woven mats to eat; urban families use dining tables. People traditionally ate with fingers, but now use knives and forks. Conversation is kept to a minimum during meals.



PASSION FRUIT

- When there are guests, they usually eat with a few selected family members; children eat separately. Guests are served first; the person who prepared the meal eats last. Standing while eating and drinking is not encouraged.
- Traditional meals were based on fresh, local foods. Contemporary foods include imported convenience items: canned or frozen vegetables; meat (corned beef, frozen greasy mutton, and turkey flaps, i.e., off-cuts); fish (tuna, sardines, mackerel); white bread.
- Breakfast: yam, taro, sweet potato; urban: white bread, cereal.
- Dinner: yam, or other staple; pork or chicken cooked with coconut milk; baked pumpkin or sliced vegetables.
- Drinks: fresh fruit juice, carbonated bottled drinks, fresh coconut. *Kava* (brewed from *Piper methysticum*, a pepper relative) is drunk ritually by men only.
- Chinese, Italian, Thai, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, and American fast food available in restaurants, bars, and cafes for tourists. Popular ones include fried chicken, hot dogs, pizza, pasta, barbecue.

Corned Beef Packets (Lu Pulu)

Canned corned beef is a convenient source of meat that does not need refrigeration and is ready to cook, hence its widespread popularity throughout the Pacific Islands. Serve with steamed taro, sliced vegetables (cucumber, tomato, carrots), and a watermelon drink for a midday or evening meal. The same method can be used with ground meat (preferably mutton), in which case it is called *lu sipi*.

4 aluminum foil squares, 10 × 10 inches
12 young taro leaves (or substitute 1 head Chinese cabbage)
1 can corned beef, cut into 4
1 cup coconut milk
1 large onion, minced

On a sheet of foil, lay 3 large taro leaves crisscrossing each other at their centers.
Spoon ¼ of the corned beef into the center of the leaves.
Sprinkle ¼ of the onion over it.
Pour ¼ cup coconut milk over onions.
Fold leaves over to enclose. Fold foil over to secure. Repeat with remaining ingredients.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 20–30 minutes, until piping hot.
Serve at once.

Cooked Bananas (Vai Siaine)

This is a favorite sweet for a snack.

1 cup coconut milk
1 cup water
4 ripe bananas, peeled and cut into chunks
¼ cup coconut milk for serving

In a pan, simmer coconut milk and water.
Add bananas; simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve warm, drizzled over with coconut milk if desired.

Marinated Fish ('Ota 'Ika)

This Tongan version of *sashimi* takes advantage of the excellent fish around the archipelago.

1½ pounds very fresh snapper, tuna, or salmon, cut into bite-sized cubes
juice of 4 lemons
3 cups coconut milk
juice of 1 lemon
1 onion, minced
1 carrot, peeled and diced
1 cucumber, peeled and diced
1 tomato, diced
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
lettuce leaves for serving

Place fish in a covered container; marinate with lemon juice for 1½ hours, refrigerated.
Drain fish, add coconut milk and lemon juice.
Stir in vegetables, salt, and pepper.
Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
Serve well chilled on lettuce leaves.

Taro in Coconut Sauce (Faikakai Topai)

This is a popular snack that can also be made with cassava, breadfruit, or yam.

1½ pounds taro or sweet potatoes (substitute cassava, breadfruit, or yam)
2 cups sugar
2 cups coconut milk
ripe papaya, pureed (or substitute papaya nectar)

Boil tubers in their skin until tender, for about 30–40 minutes.
Peel and cube. Set aside.
In a saucepan over low heat, caramelize sugar to golden brown stage.
Carefully add coconut milk (there will be splattering), stirring constantly.
Simmer for 10–15 minutes, or until thick.

(*continued*)

Pour over cubed tubers.
Serve warm or cold.
Drizzle with papaya puree or nectar, if desired.

Baked Coconut Shells (To'okutu)

This is traditionally served in the shell to accompany any meat or fish dish for lunch or dinner. It is also served as a snack with coffee.

2 cups coconut milk
4 cups grated coconut (fresh, or frozen and defrosted)
½ cup flour (or more)
4 half coconut shells (optional)
4 sheets aluminum foil, 10 × 10 inches

Mix coconut milk, grated coconut, and flour for a stiff dough, adding more flour if needed.
Divide dough into 4 portions.
Take one portion and form into small (1-inch) balls; place balls into coconut half-shells or one large baking dish. Repeat with the remaining portions. Keep other portions under a moist kitchen towel to keep them from drying out.
Cover securely with foil.
Bake in 375°F oven for 40 minutes to 1 hour, or until done.

Papaya Coconut Sweet (Faka-ovaka)

There are several methods of making this traditional sweet. In one method, the papaya is kept whole, and seeds removed through one end. The cavity is then filled with coconut milk, and the papaya is baked for hours in an underground oven. Given below is a contemporary and more convenient, but equally flavorsome, method. (See also box "Pawpaw and Papaya.")

2 medium firm ripe papayas, peeled, seeded, and cubed
2 cans coconut milk

Into a lidded baking dish or casserole dish, place papaya and coconut milk.
Cover with lid (or with aluminum foil).
Bake in preheated 375°F oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until papaya is very tender.
Serve warm or cold.

PAWPAW AND PAPAYA

Two fruits, pawpaw and papaya, are often confused in literature and popular usage. Pawpaw is the fruit of a temperate tree of North American origin (*Asimina triloba*). It is related to the tropical custard apples and soursops as they all belong to the same family of *Annonaceae*. Another name for pawpaw is "Indiana banana," because the fruits grow in clusters and resemble very fat bananas: green when unripe and bright yellow when ripe. The fruit can grow up to 4–5 inches long. Inside a thick rind are 10–15 small seeds set in an orange or, less often, white, custard-like pulp. The taste is reported to be similar to the annona (custard apple) and soursop. Pawpaws are rarely raised commercially, as they do not transport well.

The papaya is the fruit of a tropical tree, *Carica papaya*. The fruit is roughly football shaped, green when unripe, becoming mottled yellow or orange when ripe. The size of papaya fruits ranges from 5 inches to 13 inches, depending on variety. The flesh when ripe varies from pale to deep orange and encloses a mass of small black seeds, which are sometimes used fresh as a pepper substitute. Unripe papaya are used as a cooking vegetable and for pickling; additionally, their flesh contains a natural tenderizer, the enzyme papain, which is processed and sold commercially as powdered meat tenderizer.

The confusion that has arisen between these two fruits is because the papaya is called "pawpaw" in the English-speaking Caribbean countries. There is no botanical relationship between the two fruits.

Watermelon Drink ('Otai)

This very popular drink is served with any meal. Watermelons were introduced to the islands by missionaries or traders and do very well in the local climate. Instead of watermelon, mango or other fruit can be used.

½ watermelon
1 pineapple, grated (or 1 large can crushed pineapple in light syrup, well drained)
1 cup coconut milk
sugar to taste

Grate watermelon flesh into a bowl; discard seeds.
Add pineapple and coconut milk.
Adjust sweetness, or dilute with water to taste.
Serve chilled.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago are the southernmost Caribbean islands. Spanish, French, Dutch, and British colonial rules ended with the islands gaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1962. The tropical plains and low mountains with forests and woodlands are suitable for growing sugar, cocoa, coffee, and citrus fruits. Africans, East Indians, and Chinese were brought in to work the colonial plantations, and, later, settlers from Syria, Lebanon, and European countries arrived. Trinidadians (also Trinbagonians) today reflect this rich multiethnic history in their culture, languages (English, Hindi, French, Spanish, Chinese), and food. More than any other Caribbean island, Trinidadian cooking has embraced East Indian specialties such as curries.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, peas, plantain. Rice is imported, as are many other food items, for example, fresh and corned beef, salt cod, wheat flour, temperate fruit (apples).
- Fish (*cascadura*, a fresh-water fish), shellfish (shrimp, mangrove oysters, crab), pork, chicken, goat, salted and smoked meats and fish.
- Pumpkin, squash, callaloo, plantain, long bean (*bodi*), eggplant, christophene.
- Banana, pineapple, citrus, coconut, local tropical fruit: star apple (*caimite*), *pommerac* (maple or Otaheite apple), five fingers (*carambola* or star fruit).
- Seasonings: thyme, tarragon, rosemary, basil, *chandon beni* (large-leaf cilantro); curry powder, turmeric; Chinese five-spice powder, ginger; soy sauce.

Typical Dishes

- Rice dishes: peas and rice (using split peas); *pelau* (rice cooked with East Indian curry powder and spices with coconut milk) with pigeon peas, chicken or beef; okra rice.
- Stuffed breadfruit: baked breadfruit with ham, beef, or pork filling.
- Roast meats or chicken: roast pork with herbs and lemon (specially for Christmas).
- Fish and seafood dishes: fried fish with coconut sauce; mackerel and dumplings; crab back (stuffed crab).
- East Indian dishes: curried stews of meats or seafood; spiced vegetable fritters.
- Chinese-style dishes: chop suey, fried rice, roast chicken or pork (*char siu*) with Chinese spices.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Breakfast: traditionally substantial—porridge; various quick breads or boiled cassava with butter and local fruit jellies, jams, fresh fruit. Also *bul jol*, black pudding, *accra* fritters.
- Lunch: traditionally eaten at home with family, but now changing. Fast food or snack-type foods, for example, saltfish fritters or *roti* and curry. American hot dogs, hamburgers; pizza, pasta.
- Dinner: substantial meal of three courses, usually stewed or roast chicken or meat; side dishes of peas and rice, green figs (unripe bananas), fried plantain, cassava pie or *eddo* (taro) in cream sauce; dessert of fresh fruit or sweet.
- Sweets: stewed guavas, East Indian *gulab jamun*, tropical fruit ice cream (sour sop, peanut, passion fruit).
- Snacks, for tea breaks in the mid-morning or mid-afternoon: shark and bake (fried shark and pan-fried bread), sweet bread, *roti* (flat bread) and curry, *phulouri* (fried dumpling with mango sauce), pickled June plums (*pommescythere*).
- Drinks: sorrel, mawby (also *morbi*), tangerine and other fruit juice, ginger beer.

Coconut Bake

This quick bread is commonly served for breakfast, eaten with butter and/or guava jelly, accompanied by *bul jol* (flaked codfish and vegetable salad) or tomato *choka* (tomatoes cooked in onions and garlic).

2 cups flour
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
2 TBS brown sugar
1 cup coconut, grated
½ cup butter
¼ cup lard or shortening
2 eggs, beaten
2–3 TBS milk (or as necessary)

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Butter a baking sheet.
In a bowl, blend flour, baking powder, salt, brown sugar, and coconut.
Rub in butter and lard.
Add the eggs and mix into a stiff dough, adding milk if needed.
Knead lightly for 5 minutes until dough is smooth.
Let rest for 20 minutes.
Shape into a large loaf. Alternatively, divide into tennis-ball-sized rolls and shape into buns.
Place on baking sheet; bake for 25–30 minutes for the large bread, 20–25 minutes for the small buns, or until they test done.

Orange Rice

This aromatic rice dish is usually served with a meat or chicken dish for lunch or dinner.

- 4 cups freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 TBS butter
- 2 TBS sugar
- 2 cups rice, washed and drained
- grated rind from 2 oranges

In a saucepan, bring orange juice to a boil.
Stir in butter, sugar, and rice.
Cover and reduce heat to let rice simmer for about 20 minutes.
Stir in the orange rind.
Serve hot.

Stewed Chicken

This dish with its herbs and soy sauce shows the French and Chinese elements in Trinidadian cooking. Serve with orange rice (see the previous recipe) and coleslaw with pineapple for lunch or dinner.

- 4 large chicken portions (thighs and legs, breasts, or quarters, 2–3 pounds)
- 2 cups water
- 1 TBS salt
- 4 TBS vinegar (or juice of 1 lime)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 3 sprigs parsley
- 4 bell peppers, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- ½ tsp rosemary
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- soy sauce (optional) to taste
- salt and pepper to taste
- juice of 1 lime
- 3 TBS oil
- 2 TBS sugar

First wash the chicken: standard procedure for dealing with chicken throughout the islands.
In a bowl large enough to hold chicken pieces, place water, salt, and vinegar or lime juice.
Rub chicken all over to get the "washing water" into every surface.
Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Set aside.
In the same bowl (now cleaned), place chicken, onion, herbs, vegetables, salt and pepper, and soy sauce (if using) and lime juice.
Allow to marinate for 2 hours or overnight, refrigerated.
In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir in sugar; let it caramelize to a dark brown color.
Carefully add the chicken pieces, turning them around so that each side is colored by the caramel, for about 10 minutes.
Add marinade and vegetables.
Cover and let simmer for 1 hour, or until tender.
Serve hot.

Banana Nut Pudding

This sweet from Tobago is usually served with coconut milk or whipped cream after lunch or dinner. Its preparation is similar to English bread and butter pudding, but its ingredients are more sumptuous.

4 slices bread, ½-inch thick, buttered
½ cup almonds, pecans, or other nuts, chopped
4 bananas, sliced into disks
¼ cup brown sugar
grated rind from 1 lemon or 2 limes
2 eggs
1½ cups milk
¼ tsp nutmeg

Heat oven to 350°F. Butter an 8 × 8-inch baking dish.
Remove crusts and dice bread.
Place half of the bread in a layer at the bottom of the baking dish.
Sprinkle with half of the nuts.
Put all the bananas, half the sugar, and citrus rind.
Cover with remaining bread and nuts.
Beat eggs with milk and the remaining sugar.
Pour over the bread.
Sprinkle with nutmeg.
Bake for 35–40 minutes or until set.

Latterday Saints

How this Trinidadian citrus fruit dessert came by its unusual name is a puzzle.

2 grapefruits, halved
2 oranges, halved
¼ cup brown sugar
4 TBS butter

Carefully remove grapefruit pulp in sections, cutting in between the membranes. Remove white membranes. Keep shells intact.
Do the same for the oranges.
Mix grapefruit and orange pulp.
Fill the grapefruit shells with the pulp.
Mix brown sugar and butter, and sprinkle over fruit.
Put under a slow grill until sugar-butter mixture caramelizes.
Eat while warm.

TUNISIA

Tunisia is a North African country on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Settled by Berbers, Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, and Turks, it became a French protectorate in 1881 until independence in 1956. Just under half the land is desert, but with cooler northern mountains and a Mediterranean climate, wheat, fruits, vegetables, and livestock are raised. The population is almost wholly Arab. Being a Muslim country, pork is not eaten. Tunisian cuisine combines influences from Berber, Arab, French, Turkish, Jewish, and Mediterranean cooking. Although many elements are common with neighboring Algerian and Moroccan cuisine, Tunisian cooking is distinguishable from both.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: semolina (hard wheat) couscous.
- Barley, rice.
- Fish (fresh tuna, mullet, snapper), seafood (shrimp, squid, octopus), chicken, lamb, beef, dried lamb, spicy sausages (*oben*, *merguez*), dairy products, eggs.
- Tomato, pepper (hot and sweet), olive, carrot, chickpea and other legumes, pumpkin and other gourds, cabbage, cardoon, artichoke.
- Dates, melon, citrus, grapes, apple, watermelon, almond and other nuts.
- Seasonings: various spices, herbs (mint, parsley). Spice mixes such as *ras el hanut*: pepper, rosebuds, cinnamon bark, cloves; *tabil*: coriander seed, caraway, red pepper, garlic flakes; *hrus*: preserved onion, chili pepper, rose petals, cinnamon; *gâlat dagga*: grains of paradise, black pepper, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg. Table condiment also used for cooking: *harissa*.

Typical Dishes

- Couscous with chicken, fish, or *osben*, a spicy tripe sausage. Grilled/baked fish, served in spicy sauce.
- Grilled/baked meat dishes: lamb, meatballs (*kuftaqa*).
- Meat, chicken or fish, and vegetable stew (*tajine*).
- Egg dishes: *ojja* (scrambled eggs with tomatoes, sausage, and brains); *tastira* (grilled peppers with finely chopped tomato, onions, and garlic, served with a poached egg).

- Vegetable dishes: soups, salads of fresh or grilled vegetables, *mloukhia* (stew of young jute mallow leaves).
- Snacks: savory pastries (*brik*, stuffed with eggs, vegetables); sweet pastries—*mesfouf* (sweet couscous with raisins, dates), *bouza* (hazelnut and sesame cream), *makhroudh* (date-stuffed honey cakes), *baklawa* (almond and honey pastry).
- Drinks: most common are sweet mint tea, often served with pine kernels; Turkish-style coffee; freshly squeezed juice (orange, lemon); bottled carbonated drinks; palm wine (*lagmi*); anisette (anise liqueur mixed with water); grape wine.

Styles of Eating

- All food generally brought to the table (or, in traditional households, a mat on the floor) simultaneously. Diners help themselves from the staple and the meat or fish dishes.
- Breakfast: bread dipped into chickpea puree, *harissa*, olive oil or spice mixtures; or semolina cereal with dates and nuts (*farka*); coffee/tea. French-style breakfast: croissant/baguette, sausage, cheese, coffee, orange juice, fruit yogurt.
- Lunch: baguette sandwich with tuna or egg and vegetables. Or a full meal of egg- or vegetable-filled pastry (*brik*), salad of grilled peppers and tomatoes (*slata mechouia*), fish soup (*maraq sfaxiya*), fresh fruit.
- Dinner: various appetizers (*kemia*), including olives, slices of sausage, salad of fresh or grilled vegetables; chickpea soup (*lablabi*); grilled shoulder of lamb; couscous or rice; fresh fruit salad; Turkish coffee or mint tea.
- Sweets are rarely eaten at the end of the meal. Usual desserts are fruit or fruit salad.

Semolina Cereal (Farka)

This is a traditional dish eaten for breakfast.

2 cups couscous (about 1 pound)
2 cups water
¼ cup sugar
½ cup vegetable oil
1½ cups chopped toasted mixed nuts (walnut, almond, hazelnut, pistachio, or pine nut)
1 cup pitted dates, pitted and chopped roughly
2 cups milk, hot or cold
additional sugar

Place couscous in a large bowl.
Bring water, sugar, and oil to a boil in a saucepan, stirring to dissolve sugar.
Pour mixture over couscous; mix thoroughly.
Cover and let stand for 10 minutes.
Fluff with fork to separate grains.
Stir in nuts and dates.
Transfer mixture to a 13 × 9 × 2-inch baking dish.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven until hot, for about 20 minutes.

(*continued*)

Spoon into bowls and serve.
Pass around hot (or cold) milk and sugar.

Tunisian Salad (Slata Tunisia)

A salad of seasonal fresh vegetables often appears as part of the appetizers (*kemia*) before a formal meal, or as an accompaniment to a simple evening meal with bread and olives and grilled fish.

1 cucumber, sliced fine
salt
2 firm tomatoes, sliced fine
1 small onion, sliced into rings
3 red radishes, sliced fine
1 green pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips
3 hard-boiled eggs, quartered
lettuce

Sprinkle cucumber with salt; let stand for 20 minutes. Drain.
Arrange vegetables and eggs on lettuce in a large salad bowl or on individual salad plates.
Pour dressing over salad.
Chill before serving.

Dressing

4 TBS olive oil
1 TBS vinegar
1 TBS lemon juice
¼ tsp salt
⅛ tsp sugar
⅛ tsp dry mustard
⅛ tsp paprika

Blend all ingredients with an egg whisk or in a blender.

Braised Beef and Olives (Mirket Zeitun)

This stew, which uses plentiful local olives, is served for the evening meal with couscous.

2 TBS oil
1½ pounds beef, cubed
½ cup water
2 cups canned chopped tomatoes
1 TBS parsley, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ tsp pepper
salt to taste
4 ounces pitted green olives, sliced into rings

Heat oil and brown beef cubes.
Remove meat; set aside.
Add water and loosen the browned bits in pan.

Stir in tomatoes, parsley, garlic, pepper, and salt; simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in meat and simmer for 30 minutes, or until almost tender.
Add olives; continue to simmer for 15 minutes more, or until beef is very tender.
The sauce should be quite thick.
Serve hot.

Lamb and Quince Stew (Mirket al Safarjal)

This sweet dish can be made with prunes or dried apricots instead of quince. Dried rose petals are traditionally used as a flavoring. This particular combination of lamb and fruit appears to derive its provenance from Persian cuisine via the Ottoman Turks.

1¼ pounds boneless lamb, cubed (or substitute chicken or beef)
½ tsp cinnamon powder
1 tsp dried and ground rose petals (or ¼ tsp rosewater, available from Middle Eastern stores)
½ cup olive oil
1½ pounds quince, peeled, cored, and cubed (or substitute hard, unripe pears)
3 to 4 cups water
1 cup sugar
salt to taste

Toss lamb with cinnamon, rose petals (or rosewater), and salt.
Heat olive oil in a casserole over medium-high heat; brown lamb, for about 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
Add quince, cover with water, and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to low; stir in sugar, cover, and cook until the lamb is very tender and the quince soft, for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Season to taste.
Remove to a serving platter with a slotted spoon and serve with rice.

Governor's Chakchouka (Chakchoukat al Pekha)

Unlike Moroccan *chakchouka*, which always combines eggs and vegetables, this Tunisian dish omits the eggs. Serve with flat bread, couscous, or rice for a midday meal.

2 TBS olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped fine
½ pound merguez (or chorizo, or other paprika-flavored sausage), cut in bite-sized pieces
1 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed
½ tsp salt
1 pint water
4 medium tomatoes, sliced
1 medium green pepper, cored, seeded, and cut in rings

(*continued*)

In a saucepan, heat oil; sauté onion and sausages until lightly browned.
Stir in eggplant, salt, water, tomatoes, and green pepper.
Cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes.

Pepper Sauce (Harissa)

This is a common pepper sauce all over North Africa. This is not to be confused with *harees*, an Arabian and East African dish of meat and rice. In Tunisia *harissa* accompanies almost all savory dishes.

2 TBS caraway seed, ground
5 cloves garlic, crushed
½ cup chili flakes
¼ cup cumin powder
2 TBS salt
1 or 2 drops vinegar
½ cup olive oil

In a blender, mix all ingredients until smooth.
Let stand at least 1 hour before using.
Store leftover sauce refrigerated in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
Serve with any savory dish.

Almond and Sesame Pastries (Samsa)

Also known as "cigars," these are a well-loved snack, usually eaten while drinking coffee.

1¼ cups water
1 TBS lemon juice
⅔ cup sugar
2–3 drops orange-blossom water
1½ cups blanched almonds, lightly toasted and ground (or equivalent commercial ground almonds)
1½ tsp finely grated orange rind
1½ tsp cinnamon powder
about 4 ounces filo pastry
butter, melted (about ½ cup)
lightly toasted sesame seeds

In a saucepan, heat water, lemon juice, and ½ cup sugar, until dissolved to a light syrup.
Turn off heat; add orange-blossom water. Cool.
Knead ground almonds, orange rind, cinnamon, and the remaining sugar together. Reserve for filling.
Take 1 sheet of filo pastry; brush with butter. (Keep other sheets covered with a clean moist towel to keep from drying.)
Cut buttered filo into 3 strips lengthwise.
Place a small spoonful of filling at the bottom of each strip.

Fold sides over the filling; roll pastry up along the length.
Seal the cigar by brushing the inner pastry tip with butter.
Brush the outside of rolled cigar with butter; place on baking sheet.
Repeat with remaining pastry and filling, keeping cigars from touching.
Bake cigars in a preheated 350°F oven for 15–20 minutes, or until crisp and golden.
Remove from oven.
While hot, dip pastries a few at a time into the syrup.
Leave for 3 minutes so cigars absorb the syrup.
Transfer to a plate; sprinkle generously with sesame seeds.
Serve at room temperature with coffee.

TURKEY

A secular Muslim, though not Arab, republic, Turkey was established in 1923 from the remains of the Turkish Ottoman empire that controlled the region from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries. With its Mediterranean temperate climate, and terrain of high plateaus and rolling hills ideal for raising wheat and other grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock, Turkey is self-sufficient in food and is a major exporter. Most of the population is Turkish, with a significant Kurdish minority. Turkish cuisine is elaborate and sophisticated, drawing from Levantine, Persian, central Asian, and European cuisines. It has left its imprint on the cuisines of the Middle East and the Balkans. Many Middle Eastern recipes owe their origin to Turkish originals, and vice versa.

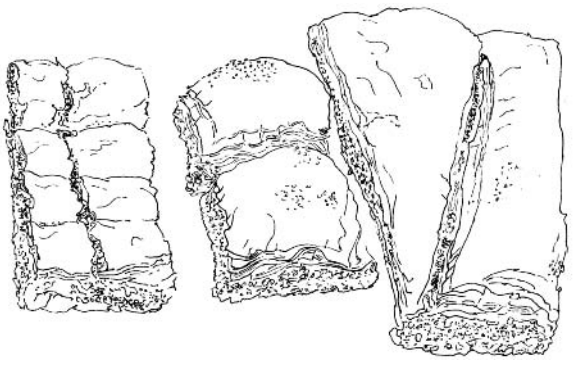
Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, flat breads, pasta.
- Lamb, beef, fish, seafood, chicken, eggs, dairy products.
- Eggplant, zucchini, cucumber, bell pepper, tomato, pickled olives, pickled grape leaves (used for stuffing).
- Fig, grape, apricot, watermelon, cantaloupe, apple, orange, rose petals (for jam).
- Seasonings: mint, dill, cumin, garlic, onion, yogurt, olive oil.

Typical Dishes

- Grilled meats: *doner kebab*, *shish kebab*. Grilled seafood and fish.
- Meat-filled dumplings called *manti*, an echo (via the Mongol and Turkish empires) of the Chinese *mantou* and central Asian *manty*.
- Pickles: olives; cucumber; assorted vegetables.
- Vegetable dishes: stuffed eggplant (*dolma*), grape leaves, peppers.
- Rice dishes: *pilaf* with meat or vegetables and spices.
- Yogurt-based dishes: soup; sauce for fried vegetables or filled dumplings (*manti*).
- Flat breads: round sesame buns (*simit*), pita (*pide*), flat sheet bread (*yufka*), which is dried and keeps indefinitely.
- Sweets include cakes sweetened with honey or syrup: multilayered pastry interleaved with nuts (*baklava*); syrup-glazed fritters (*tulumba*).

Styles of Eating



BAKLAVA

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Dining is usually European style, with knife, fork, and spoon, though people in the traditional hinterland may still share from a single dish.
- Breakfast: bread (usually *simit*—round sesame-topped bun), olives, white cheese, jam, egg; or cheese- or meat-stuffed pastry (*pogaça*, *borek*); tea/coffee.
- Lunch: soup, *pilaf*, salad, fresh fruit, tea.
- Dinner: Most meals start with *meze*, appetizers of pickled olives or stuffed grape leaves, followed by soup. Skewered meat, salad, dessert, tea.
- Snacks: sweet pastry (*baklava*), stuffed savory pastry.
- Drinks: Turkish coffee and tea are famous. Fruit juices, especially grape; *ayran* (yogurt drink). Winter drinks: hot wild orchid drink (*salep*), hot wheat or millet drink (*boza*).

Dill and Yogurt Soup (Yayla Çorbasi)

Each region makes this yogurt soup differently. *Yayla* means meadow, and thus implies flavoring with herbs, such as mint or dill. To thicken the soup, rice, barley or bulghur (cracked wheat), or chickpeas are added.

2 TBS butter
1 onion, finely chopped
2 TBS flour
4 cups chicken stock
1 large clove garlic, minced
salt, pepper to taste
2 cups canned chickpeas, drained
2 cups cooked rice
1½ cups plain yogurt
2 TBS fresh mint or dill, chopped

Melt butter over medium heat; fry onion until soft.
Stir in flour, mixing well.
Gradually add stock, garlic, salt, and pepper.
Bring to a boil; add chickpeas and rice.
Bring to a boil again; reduce heat and simmer for 20–25 minutes.
Whisk yogurt in a bowl; slowly stir into the soup.
Let soup heat through. Do not let it boil or yogurt will curdle.
Garnish with mint or dill and ladle into bowls.
Serve at once.

Stuffed Eggplant (Imam Bayildi)

Imam bayildi literally means, "the imam fainted." As one legend goes, a certain imam (Muslim religious leader), after observing a holy day and ending a long

fast, was so taken with the delicious aroma of this dish that he fainted away. Another legend is that he fainted upon learning the amount of oil that went into his favorite dish. This may be served at lunch or dinner, depending on accompaniments.

2 large eggplants, each weighing about 1 pound
3 TBS olive oil
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 yellow or red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
½ cup tomato paste
1 tsp cinnamon
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup parsley, chopped fine
juice of ½ lemon
2 cups water or tomato juice
¼ cup olive oil

Slice each eggplant in half.
With a teaspoon or grapefruit spoon, scoop out pulp from the middle, leaving a ¼-inch wall all around.
Sprinkle salt over eggplant shells; let drain for 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry.
Chop eggplant pulp and reserve.
In a skillet, heat oil over medium heat; stir in onions and garlic; fry until onions are soft.
Stir in eggplant pulp and peppers, frying for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, cinnamon, salt, and pepper.
Simmer for 5 minutes; remove from heat.
Stir in parsley and lemon juice; adjust seasoning.
Place eggplant shells side-by-side in a baking pan.
Fill each with eggplant mixture.
Pour water or tomato juice around eggplants. Drizzle olive oil on eggplants.
Cover with foil.
Bake in preheated 400°F oven for 30–45 minutes, or until eggplants are tender.
Serve hot or cold.

Meatballs Stuffed with Nuts, Fruit, and Spices (Icli Kofte)

These meatballs, originally made with lamb, are a popular dish for dinner. They can also be served fried. Serve these with a *pilaf* and side dishes of vegetables.

1 cup fine bulghur (cracked wheat, available at Middle Eastern groceries)
1½ cups water
½ pound ground fatty beef
½ pound ground chicken or turkey
½ cup ground almonds
½ cup parsley, finely chopped
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
4 cups chicken stock
¼ cup parsley, chopped

Soak bulghur in water for 30 minutes.
Place bulghur in food processor. Add meat, almonds, parsley, salt, and pepper; process until mixture is a smooth paste. Add a bit more water if necessary.
Mold the mixture into egg-sized ovals.
Take a meatball, make a hole in the middle with a teaspoon handle.
Place 1 teaspoon of filling in the hole and squeeze meat to seal.
Repeat with the remaining balls and filling.
Bring the stock to a simmer in a shallow saucepan.
Slide in meatballs and simmer, covered, for 25–35 minutes, or until done.
Turn balls to ensure even cooking.
Distribute meatballs among warmed plates.
Spoon some stock over; sprinkle with parsley.

Stuffing

2 TBS olive oil
1 cup pine nuts
1 onion, chopped fine
¼ cup raisins
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp cumin

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a skillet over low heat; stir in pine nuts and sauté till just golden (be careful, they burn easily). Remove and set aside.
In the same pan, heat 1 tablespoon oil; increase heat to medium and sauté onions until soft.
Stir in raisins and sauté for 2–3 minutes.
Turn off heat.
Stir in paprika and cumin; add pine nuts and blend well.

Sweet Fritters (Lokma)

These fritters are typical of Turkish sweets that are soaked in honey or syrup. Like doughnuts, they are best eaten when fresh.

1 ounce yeast
¼ cup warm water
1⅓ cups flour
1 TBS butter, melted
½ tsp salt
⅔ cup water
oil for frying
½ cup crushed pistachio nuts or toasted almonds

Dissolve yeast in warm water with a pinch of flour. Leave in a warm place until frothy, about 10 minutes.
Blend flour, yeast, butter, and salt.
Gradually add water, until the mixture forms a dough.
Knead lightly for 5 minutes on a floured surface.
Place in a greased bowl, cover with plastic film, and leave in a warm draft-free place for 1 hour, until doubled in volume.
Divide dough into walnut-sized pieces; refrigerate for ½ hour.

(*continued*)

Heat oil in a deep fryer to 350°F.
Carefully slip dough balls into oil, just a few at a time so as not to lower the oil temperature.
When the balls are puffed up and golden, remove and drain on paper towels.
Continue frying the rest of the balls.
Drop fried balls into the syrup.
Leave for 10–15 minutes to absorb the syrup.
Place on a serving dish, sprinkle with nuts, and serve at once.

Syrup

1¾ cups sugar
1½ cups water
2 TBS lemon juice

Simmer all ingredients until thickened, for about 10 minutes.

Fruit Ice (Sharbatee Gulab)

Rose petals are a traditional flavoring that may have originated in Iran but certainly were spread by Ottoman Turks to the corners of their far-flung empire. They are very popular in Morocco, Tunisia, and Eastern Europe as well as Turkey.

¾ cup rose petal jam
¼ cup water
3 cups canned pineapple, drained and shredded
¼ cup lemon juice
1 TBS rosewater
candied rose petals for garnish (optional)

In a small saucepan, heat jam with water and strain well; let cool.
Add pineapple, lemon juice, and rosewater.
Mix well and transfer to an ice cream maker; follow instructions for making a sherbet.
Alternatively, transfer mixture to ice trays.
Cover with foil and freeze until thick but not solid, about ¾–1 hour (depends on your freezer and depth of ice tray).
Remove from freezer, break up ice, and pour into individual dessert glasses.
Return to freezer and let freeze.
About 15 minutes before serving, transfer glasses to refrigerator.
Garnish with candied rose petals.

TURKMENISTAN

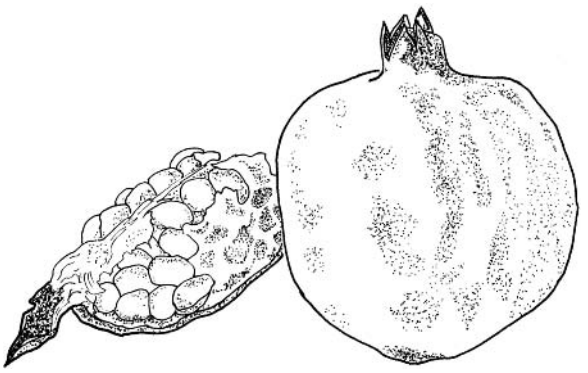
Turkmenistan is a lightly populated Central Asian country on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Conquered by Russia in the late nineteenth century, it was a part of the Soviet Union until it broke up in 1991. Although it has plentiful oil and natural gas resources, the country is underdeveloped. The terrain is subtropical desert (the famous Garagum Desert fills most of the country) with hot summers and cold winters: wheat and other cereals, olives, and oil seeds are grown. The rest of the country is rolling steppe and highlands, where sheep, camels, and horses are raised. Most of the population are Muslim Turkmen, with Uzbek and Russian minorities. Nomadism and stock breeding are still prevalent, although many have settled in irrigated land around the Amur Darya River. Turkmen cuisine is similar to that of other nomadic neighbors, with minimal Russian influence. Mutton is highly prized.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: mutton, dairy products.
- Wheat, millet, other cereals.
- Camel, domesticated and wild goat, beef, fish (sturgeon, gray mullet from Caspian Sea), dried and smoked meat and fish, sausage.
- Pumpkin, gourd, eggplant, olive, carrot, bell pepper, cabbage, tomato, potato, spinach, legumes.
- Melon, grape, apricot, pomegranate, dried fruit (especially melon), pistachio, hazelnut.
- Dairy products: fermented skimmed camel's milk (*chal*), sour cream (*agaran*), clotted cream (*gaymak*), fresh white cheese (*suzme*), smoked cheese (*peynir*).
- Seasonings: pomegranate juice, black pepper, red chili pepper, mint, parsley.

Typical Dishes

- Flavored rice and meat: *palav* (*plov*).
- Grilled or roasted meats (mutton, goat preferred; horses are highly prized for riding, thus not commonly eaten as in neighboring countries); less often fish.
- Soups and stews of meat (less often fish) and vegetables: *dograma*.
- Flat breads: *churek* (called *nan* or *non* in neighboring countries); flaky *gatlama*.



POMEGRANATE

- Vegetables: salads of charcoal-grilled eggplants or bell peppers; rice and meat-stuffed grape leaves or other vegetables (*doloma*); pumpkin-stuffed steamed dumplings (*manti*).

Styles of Eating

- Families eat on a floor cloth around a central dish, from which diners help themselves with their hands. Male guests eat with the household males, and women and children eat separately from men.
- Breakfast: millet or cracked wheat porridge, yogurt and/or curds, watermelon or other fruit jam, green tea.
- Lunch: flat bread with curds or cheese; rice with stewed or grilled mutton with vegetables; fresh fruits or sweet confections with green tea.
- Dinner: similar to lunch.
- Snacks: steamed or baked savory (meat-filled) pastries (*fichi*); vegetable-filled pastries (*somsa*); sugar-glazed nuts with tea.

Flavored Rice (Palav, Plov)

Also called *ash*, this is the main dish in many Turkmen meals. The name comes from the Iranian *pilaf*. Rice is imported, but is in high demand as an energy-giving food on the steppes. The dish is meant to be quite oily. The traditional mark of a good Turkmen *palav* is that the lamb fat should run down your arms while eating. Health consciousness has made contemporary *palavs* less rich, using sunflower oil instead of lamb fat, and other meats instead of lamb. Reduce oil to 2 tablespoons if desired.

¼ cup oil
1 pound fatty beef or preferably mutton, cubed
5–6 cloves garlic, chopped
2 medium onions, chopped
¼ tsp salt
5 carrots, peeled and roughly shredded (using a large-holed grater)
2 cups rice
3 cups water

Heat oil in a heavy, lidded pot until hazy.
Add meat and garlic cloves.
Cook, stirring, until the meat browns (10 minutes).
Add onions and salt. Cook until onions are soft. Add carrots and stir well.
Add rice and water to meat mixture.
Stir well and bring to a boil.
Lower heat immediately, cover lid and seal well, and cook on lowest heat for 15–20 minutes.

Remove from fire and allow to rest, without opening lid, for a further 10 minutes.
Serve hot.

Meat Pie (Ishlekly, Ishlekli)

This is a popular dish often eaten as a snack or for a light midday meal. Local mushrooms are sometimes added. Add 1 cup sliced white mushrooms if desired. Serve this hot with green tea.

2 cups flour
3 TBS butter
¼ tsp salt
½ tsp baking powder
1½ TBS sour cream
1 cup milk
1 egg, beaten
¼ pound ground lamb or beef
2 onions, diced
1 can chopped tomatoes
salt and pepper to taste
1 TBS (or more) melted butter

Heat oven to 400°F.
Blend flour, butter, salt, baking powder, sour cream, milk, and egg until mixture forms a dough.
Knead for 15 minutes on a floured surface until elastic and shiny; let rest for 20–30 minutes, covered with a damp cloth.
Mix meat, onions, and tomatoes in a separate bowl and season to taste.
Divide dough into 2 unequal portions, about ⅔ and ⅓.
On a floured surface, roll each portion of dough out into a ¼-inch-thick disk. The smaller amount of dough should be about 2 inches smaller than the larger.
Place larger circle of dough on a greased cookie sheet.
Spread meat mixture evenly over dough, leaving a 1-inch margin around the rim.
Place smaller dough circle on top of meat mixture.
Raise rim of larger dough circle and fold over the upper one.
Pinch or crimp edges together, sealing well. Top with melted butter.
Prick a few holes in a decorative pattern on the upper crust, being careful not to pierce through to the bottom crust.
Bake for 25 minutes or until golden brown.
Brush more butter onto baked pie crust if desired.

Fried Soup (Shorba)

Turkmens distinguish between "fried" soups (the meat and other ingredients are first fried, then simmered) and boiled soups (no frying). Tomatoes and potatoes are foreign introductions to traditional Turkmen cooking, but these are now commonly used in many dishes. Soup is served with flat bread.

2 TBS oil
1 pound lamb, cubed
2 onions, sliced
2 tomatoes, cubed
2 cups pumpkin flesh, cubed
½ tsp salt
4 cups boiling water
1 tsp paprika

Heat oil and brown lamb in a saucepan.
Add vegetables and salt.
Reduce heat to lowest possible and simmer for 10 minutes
Add boiling water and paprika.
Simmer until the lamb is tender, about 45 minutes. Correct seasoning.
Serve in individual soup bowls, ensuring everyone has some meat.

Boiled Soup (Chektyrma)

This "boiled" soup is served with flat bread.

6 cups water
1 pound lamb, shank, or other cut with bone, or beef
2 onions, finely chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 cup spinach, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
salt to taste
1 tsp paprika
¼ tsp saffron dissolved in 1 TBS water
1 tsp fresh mint, chopped
1 TBS parsley, finely chopped

Boil water in a saucepan.
Add lamb and bring to a boil. Skim froth.
Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour until the meat is so tender that it almost falls off the bones.
Add onions and tomatoes; simmer for 15 minutes.
Add spinach and garlic; simmer for 5 minutes.
Season with salt, paprika, and saffron.
Mix well, cover, let stand for 15 minutes.
Divide among 4 deep and large soup bowls; garnish with herbs.

Potato Salad

The Russian occupation of Turkmenistan for nearly a century introduced mayonnaise and potato, and their combination as a salad. This salad has become a commonly eaten dish in markets and homes, accompanying more traditional dishes such as rice and grilled skewered meats.

2 cups boiled potatoes, sliced
1 cup pickled cucumber, sliced into thin strips
1 carrot, sliced into thin strips
1 cup green peas, parboiled
2 apples, peeled and thinly sliced lengthwise
2 cups cooked beef, sliced into thin 1 × 2-inch strips
4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced lengthwise, for garnish

Dressing

⅔ cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream or yogurt
3 TBS fresh parsley, chopped
½ onion, minced
salt and pepper to taste

Into a large serving bowl, place all vegetables and meat.
In a separate bowl, mix dressing ingredients then pour into the serving bowl.
Toss salad gently but thoroughly.
Top with eggs.
Refrigerate for 30–60 minutes and serve chilled.

Glazed Fritters (Shakshak, Chakchak)

These are a ubiquitous sweet and snack, best eaten with hot tea.

2 eggs
1 TBS sugar
2 TBS butter, softened
¼ tsp salt
¼ cup milk
2½ cups flour
oil for deep-frying
1 cup slivered almonds or halved hazelnuts

Glaze

1½ cups honey
4 tsp sugar

Blend eggs, sugar, butter, salt, milk, and flour in a deep bowl until the mixture forms a dough.
Knead for 10–15 minutes on a floured surface; set aside for 30–40 minutes, covered with a damp cloth.
Roll out dough into a rectangle ¼-inch thick.
Cut lengthwise into strips 1-inch wide; cut strips crosswise into smaller pieces, about 2 inches long.
Fry pastry pieces in medium-hot oil (350°F) for 5–7 minutes or until pale golden brown.
Drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil.

(*continued*)

Prepare glaze: cook honey and sugar at low heat until hard ball stage (250–265°F).
Dip fritters a few at a time into syrup, coating each thoroughly.
Shape into a mound or pyramid on a large, flat buttered plate.
Sprinkle with nuts.

TYROL

The Tyrol area, once part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and an (almost) independent country, sprawls on the high mountains across Italy (Trentino and South Tyrol) and Austria (Tyrol). The area is mountainous, with steep-sided valleys and a cool Alpine climate. The high altitude and pure environment yield quality meat, milk products, and wine. The population comprises primarily Germans and Italians, with a minority group of Ladins, who speak an almost forgotten Romansch language called Ladin (a language derived from vulgar Latin). Tyrolean food is robust and blends German, Italian, and Hungarian elements.

Foodstuffs

- Bread, noodles, dumplings (of buckwheat, rye, and wheat flour).
- Beef, pork; venison, boar, hare, other wild game; chicken, pheasant, quail, innards (tripe, liver); preserved meats (ham, sausage, bacon); cheese, sour cream, and other dairy products.
- Potato, cabbage, carrot, turnip, celeriac, tomato, porcini and other mushrooms, pickled vegetables (sauerkraut).
- Apple, pear, plum, apricot, cherry, bilberries, chestnut, almond, other nuts.
- Seasonings: garlic, herbs (parsley, sage, marjoram, basil, chives, rosemary, etc.), cinnamon, nutmeg, juniper berries, bacon. Fruit mustard made of mandarin oranges.
- Drinks: barley water (*orzata*), fruit juices, coffee, wine, beer, schnapps (fruit liqueur).

Typical Dishes

- Soups: pea, barley, tripe, wine.
- Roast/grilled dishes: stuffed chicken, marinated hare. Preserved meats: blood and chestnuts sausage, beef marinated in juniper berries.
- Potato dishes: pan-fried onion, meat, and potato (*gröstl*); meat- or potato-filled dumplings (*schlipfkrapfen*).
- Dumplings (*knödel*, *canederli*): ham-, liver-, fruit-, or cheese-stuffed.
- Meat and vegetable stews: *golasc* (goulash); lamb seared and braised in red wine.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Bread, well-matured bacon (*speck*), and wine are always served first at celebrations and as appetizers.
- Breakfast: muesli, yogurt, homemade jams, cheese, farmer's ham and bacon; coffee.
- Lunch: savory cheese-filled dumplings (*knödel*), salad, apple fritters, coffee.
- Dinner: pea soup, potato fritters, seared and braised lamb, poppy-seed doughnuts, stewed apple, plum liqueur (*schnapps*).
- Snacks: doughnuts; fritters (*kiachle*); pancakes; slices of cheese, well-aged bacon, sausage, pickles, and bread with wine (*brettljause*).
- Desserts: apple strudel, apple fritters, doughnuts.

Tyrolean Soup (Tiroler Suppe)

Meals often begin with this kind of warming soup.

¼ cup split yellow peas
4 cups ham stock, skimmed of fat
2 sprigs fresh thyme
2 TBS butter
1 onion, minced
1 TBS flour
1 celeriac root or 2 stalks celery, peeled and diced
2 potatoes, diced
salt, pepper to taste
1 TBS sour cream per person for garnish

Soak peas overnight in water; drain.
In a saucepan, simmer peas, stock, and thyme, for 40 minutes to 1 hour, or until peas are tender.
In a skillet, melt butter over medium heat; fry onion until soft.
Stir in flour, mixing well.
Stir in celeriac and potatoes, fry for 2–3 minutes.
Stir the potato mixture into peas.
Simmer for another 20–30 minutes, until potatoes are tender.
Season with salt and pepper; discard thyme.
Ladle into bowls with a dollop of sour cream.

Potato Grosti (Grosti da Patac)

These potato fritters are a common accompaniment to main dishes.

3 potatoes, boiled, peeled, and mashed
¼ cup flour
2 eggs, beaten
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp olive oil
oil for deep-frying

Mix potatoes, flour, eggs, salt, and oil in a bowl or food processor until mixture forms a ball.
Remove dough, knead and roll out ¼-inch thick on a floured surface.
Cut into strips 4 × 2 inches.
Deep-fry in hot oil; drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Poppy Seed Doughnuts (Crafons)

Doughnuts of all kinds are served as dessert or snack. These are from the Val Gardena region.

1 ounce yeast
1 cup (or more) warm milk
2 pounds flour, sifted
3 egg yolks
1 ounce butter, melted
rind of 1 lemon, grated
oil for frying

Sprinkle yeast over milk; leave for 15 minutes in a warm place until frothy.
Blend flour, yeast mixture, egg yolks, butter, and rind, until the mixture forms a soft dough.
Add a bit more warm milk if it seems dry.
Place dough in a greased bowl; cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume.
Turn dough onto a floured board; punch down and knead quickly and divide into 8 pieces.
Roll out into balls; flatten balls out to about 1-inch thick.
With a very sharp, thin-bladed knife, make a slit on one curved wall of each disk (make sure not to pierce through the whole disk).
Place a spoonful of filling inside the slit; seal top flap securely to bottom.
Heat oil to 360°F.
Fry disks until well puffed up and golden brown.
Remove and drain on paper towels.
Serve warm or cold.

Filling

4 TBS poppy seeds
2 TBS sugar
¼ tsp ground cloves
¼ tsp cinnamon powder
2 TBS honey
1 egg yolk, beaten

Mix all ingredients thoroughly, adding water to moisten if necessary.

UGANDA

Uganda is a landlocked central African country on the western shore of Lake Victoria. It was a British protectorate until independence in 1962.

Uganda sits on a plateau, which moderates the tropical climate, making ideal conditions for growing coffee, its foremost crop. Uganda is among the world's top ten exporters of coffee. The population comprises several ethnic groups, Baganda, Bunyoro, Toro, Ankole, and Basoga among them. There used to be an East Asian minority but most were driven out by the Ugandan government in the late twentieth century. Early kingdoms, such as Buganda, did much to influence the cuisine. Ugandan food is based on plentiful bananas and beef, with elements also from Indian cuisine.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: green banana (*matoke*).
- Sorghum, cassava, millet, rice.
- Beef, pork, goat (also called mutton), chicken, wild game.
- Fresh-water fish (fresh and dried) from lakes: Nile trout, tilapia. Smoked and dried fish from Lake Victoria and from the Nile are important flavoring ingredients throughout the region.
- Potato, plantain, sweet potato, soybeans and other legumes, tomato, sesame seed.
- Banana (many kinds), pineapple, mango, papaya, avocado, guava.
- Seasonings: ground peanut powder, sesame seed paste, curry powder, onion, tomato, pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Meat stew (*nyama choma*).
- Roast/grilled meats: chicken, skewered goat.
- Beef, chicken, or peanuts steamed in banana leaves (*luombo*).
- Fish dishes: fried, steamed.
- Groundnut (peanut) stew or sauce.
- Indian-style dishes: flat breads (*chapati*, *naan*), curried stews, pastries (*sambusa*).
- Millet bread (*oburo*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Most families eat on a mat on the floor, sharing a side dish or stew, which is ladled onto the staple *matoke*.
- Staples, usually steamed and mashed green banana (*matoke*), or cassava, sweet potato, or yams, are eaten with chicken or meat stew, peanut sauce, and beans or peas.
- Breakfast: porridge, fruit, tea/coffee.
- Lunch: *matoke* (green banana) or other staple, peanut sauce, bean or vegetable stew.
- Dinner: *matoke* or other staple, beef or chicken stew, steamed peanut parcels (*luombo*), peanut sauce, fresh fruit.
- Snacks: Indian-style *chapati* (flat bread), Indian-style *sambusa* (meat- or vegetable-filled fried pastry, doughnut-like fritters (*mandazi*).
- Drinks: fruit juices, bottled carbonated drinks, coffee, tea, local banana beer (*pombe*), millet-based alcohol (*waraqi*) (see box "African Beer").
- Restaurants, bars, and cafes in the capital serve Indian, Italian, Ethiopian, Chinese, and Thai dishes and fast food (burger, steak, fried chicken, pizza) from South African/Zimbabwe chains.

Breakfast Porridge (Obungi Bwa Kalo)

Preparation of porridge differs by region and ethnic group. Sorghum, millet, or other grains, or a mix of cornmeal and cassava flour, are roasted, with or without germination and fermentation (these two latter steps increase the vitamin and nutrient content) before using. The chosen cereal is simmered for 15–20 minutes with water or other liquids, such as sour milk or juice. The original recipe calls for banana juice, for which orange has been substituted here. Sugar, milk, or mashed bananas may be added according to personal preferences.

1 cup millet flour (available from health food or specialty stores)
3–4 cups orange juice
sugar
4 TBS sesame paste (*tahina*)
1 cup milk
2 bananas, pureed with juice of 1 lemon

In a saucepan, blend flour with orange juice.
Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer.
Stir constantly until thickened to desired consistency, for about 10–15 minutes.
Take off heat.
Ladle into individual bowls and serve.
Pass around sugar, sesame paste, milk, and banana puree for diners to stir into their bowl.

AFRICAN BEER

Homemade beer is a very important part of traditional African diet, and there are records of people living on nothing but the nutrients from this low-alcohol beer. Beer is also brewed for many parties and festivals, to thank neighbors for help at harvest time or for putting up a house, and to smooth social relations. The beer is often very thick and must be drunk through a straw, and since it has no hops, it is neither bitter, nor will it keep for more than a few days.

Millet Beer from Central Africa (Dolo)

Millet, which is a hardy crop that survives in relatively parched conditions, is the basis for beers in Central Africa. Red or white millet grain is soaked in water. The grain is then spread over dried straw or plastic to germinate for three days while kept wet. The sprouted grain, called malt, is subsequently dried in the sun. The dried malt is then pounded in a mortar, placed in a pot with water, and simmered for half a day on low heat. The liquid is allowed to cool, yeast is added from the previous *dolo* brewing (though nowadays, commercial yeast might be used). The beer is allowed to ferment overnight, then drunk early in the morning. As the day progresses, the *dolo* gets stronger.

Banana Beer from East Africa

Banana beer is made from bananas, mixed with a cereal flour (often sorghum flour) and fermented to an orange-colored, alcoholic beverage. It is sweet and slightly cloudy with a shelf life of only a few days. There are many variations in how the beer is made. The bananas used for making the beer are not the sweet kind familiar from U.S. stores but special harder fruit somewhat like plantains. Sometimes more than one kind of banana is used, to balance the flavors. The cereal is necessary as a starter for the yeast, which otherwise cannot digest the banana starches.

A modern nonalcoholic version, that tastes somewhat like the original, is prepared as follows:

2 pounds ripe bananas, peeled and roughly chopped
2 quarts cold water
juice of 1 lime

Place bananas in a blender in batches, with plenty of water, and blend to a thin gruel.
Add lime juice.
Place juice in a covered container in a cool place for 6 hours to allow the flavors to meld.
Pour through a fine-meshed kitchen sieve or fine cheesecloth to clarify.
Chill and serve cold.

Ginger Beer

Ginger beer is popular throughout Africa as a refreshing drink and is often made at home.

(Yield: more than 2½ gallons)
1 pound fresh ginger, grated (to grate ginger, keep in freezer for 24 hours, then grate on any fine grater)
peels of 4 fresh pineapples (use pineapple flesh for some other dish)
2 gallons boiling water
2 tsp yeast dissolved in ½ cup lukewarm water
3½ cups brown unrefined sugar

Place ginger and pineapple in a large stainless steel pot or heatproof glass bowl.
Pour boiling water and cool to lukewarm.
Add yeast.
Allow to stand overnight, covered (a few layers of clean kitchen towel are best), but not sealed.
Add sugar the following day.
Chill and strain. Bottle tightly and refrigerate.
Serve within a day.

Vegetable Casserole

There are many variations on this dish. Substitute given vegetables with what is in season. Serve this as a side dish for a midday or evening meal.

2 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tomatoes, diced
1 eggplant, cubed
1 zucchini, cubed
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cubed
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
1 pound fresh spinach, chopped (or 1 10-ounce package frozen spinach, defrosted) or any other greens available

In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Stir-fry onions until soft.
Add vegetables in the order given, frying each for 2–3 minutes.
Add salt and pepper.
Cover pan, reduce heat, simmer for 5 minutes.
Stir in spinach; simmer for 2–3 minutes or until heated through.
Serve immediately.

Chicken Stew

Serve this with the staple for dinner.

2 TBS oil
4 large chicken portions (quarters, breasts, or legs and thighs)
2 onions, cubed
3 tomatoes, cut into eighths
2 potatoes, peeled and cubed
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Add chicken and brown on all sides, for about 10 minutes.
Stir in onions, tomatoes, potatoes, salt, pepper, and just enough water to cover.

(*continued*)

Cover pan; simmer until chicken is tender, for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Adjust seasoning.

Groundnut Sauce

Groundnuts are what non-Africans call peanuts. Variations on this hot sauce appear all over Africa using peanuts, ground peanuts, or natural peanut butter. The most common use of this sauce is to spread it over fried chicken or fish. It is frequently served over *matoke*, plain white rice or boiled sweet or white potatoes. It can be made without the dried fish. Small pieces of smoked fish (mackerel or herring) can also be added for additional flavor, or substituted for the cayenne. This sauce can be made in advance and warmed up before serving.

¼ pound dried fish, such as salt cod
2 tsp peanut oil
2 onions, chopped
4 tomatoes, chopped
2 tsp cayenne powder
1 tsp curry powder
1 cup peanut butter, smooth or crunchy
1 cup (or more) water or stock
salt, pepper to taste

Soak salt cod overnight in cold water. Change the water at least twice during that time.
Drain and pat dry. Flake roughly, discarding skin and bones.
In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat.
Fry onions until brown, for about 5 minutes.
Add tomatoes; cook uncovered for 5 minutes.
Add fish, cayenne, curry powder, and peanut butter.
Stir in just enough water or stock for a thick but not runny consistency, mixing well. Season to taste.
Simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes, stirring often to avoid sticking.
Add more water or correct seasoning if necessary.

Spinach and Simsim

Sesame seeds, called *simsim* in Arabic and Swahili, were introduced by the Arabs and have become a major crop throughout northeastern Africa. They are often used in paste form (an Arab influence) and added to enrich and flavor vegetable stews. Serve this as a side dish for midday or evening meals.

½ cup sesame seeds
2 TBS butter
3 stalks green onion, chopped
1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, defrosted, or about 1 pound fresh spinach, sorted and rinsed
3–4 TBS water or stock
salt, pepper to taste
juice of ½ lemon

In a skillet, dry-fry sesame seeds, stirring constantly, until golden (they will start jumping around). Remove immediately from skillet so they don't burn. Set aside.
In a saucepan over medium heat, melt butter.
Stir in green onion, and fry for 2–3 minutes.
Add spinach, stir-frying for 2–3 minutes.
Add water or stock.
Season with salt and pepper; simmer for 2–3 minutes more until liquid boils.
Turn off heat.
Sprinkle toasted sesame seeds and lemon juice over spinach.

Matoke I (*Plain*)

Matoke (or *Mato'oke*) is the national staple. It is usually made from a variety of nonsweet banana. Substitute green Cavendish bananas (the variety most often commercially available) or plantains. *Matoke* is most often steamed in banana leaf.

6 green bananas or semi-ripe plantains, peeled and left whole
salt to taste

Lightly salt bananas and place in a microwaveable container.
Microwave according to directions until very soft, usually 3–5 minutes on high for an 800-watt unit.
Mash. Keep warm until needed.

Matoke II (*Fancy*)

2 pounds green bananas or ripe plantains, peeled and cubed
juice of 1 lemon
oil for frying
1 onion, chopped
2–3 tomatoes, chopped (or canned tomatoes, drained)
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 chili pepper, cored, seeded, and minced
4 cloves garlic, minced
salt, coriander, cayenne or red pepper (to taste)
1 cup beef stock

Sprinkle bananas with lemon juice; set aside.
Heat oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat.
Fry onion, tomatoes, green pepper, hot pepper, and garlic together.
Stir in spices and seasoning.
Pour in stock; cover and bring to a boil.

(*continued*)

Reduce heat; add bananas; simmer until tender.
Serve hot with meat, vegetable, or fish stew.

Royal Steamed Packets (Oluwombo)

This is an adaptation of a classic dish of royal dinners and is popular nowadays throughout Uganda, especially at holiday time. It was invented in the nineteenth century by the king of Buganda's chef originally wrapped in banana leaves.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 pound any combination of two or more of beef, chicken, goat, pork, deboned smoked fish, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 onions, chopped roughly
2 tomatoes, chopped
4 TBS tomato paste
1 cup stock (beef, chicken, or vegetable)
salt, pepper to taste
2 cups natural peanut butter
¼ pound mushrooms, quartered
2 bell peppers, cored, seeded, and quartered
6 × 12-inch sheets of aluminum foil

Heat oil over medium heat; brown meat on all sides. Set aside.
In the same oil, sauté onions until soft.
Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, stock, seasoning, and peanut butter. Blend well.
If necessary, add a bit of water to make a smooth, but not runny, sauce.
Let sauce heat thoroughly.
Divide meat, mushrooms, and sauce into six portions.
Take a sheet of foil; place a portion of meat, mushrooms, and a piece of bell pepper in the center.
Spoon a portion of the sauce over.
Fold foil securely, to ensure no sauce leaks out.
Make similar packets of the remaining portions.
Steam packets over boiling water for an hour.
Replenish water as necessary.
Serve over plain *matoke*.

Coconut-Peanut Brittle (Kashata)

This is a popular street food all over Uganda.

2 cups sugar
1 cup fresh grated coconut (or 2 cups dried grated coconut moistened with a few tablespoons of milk or water)
1 cup roasted peanuts
½ tsp ground cinnamon or cardamom
a pinch of salt
½ cup wheat flour (optional)

In a skillet over medium heat, melt sugar until it just begins to caramelize.
Reduce heat; quickly stir in all other ingredients, mixing thoroughly.
Into a lightly buttered 8 × 8-inch baking pan, press the mixture evenly.
Cut into squares or diamonds while still warm.
Let cool and then serve.

THE UIGHURS

The Uighurs (Uyghurs) are a Muslim nomadic people related to the Mongols. Although they live mainly in Xinjiang Province in China, their culture is completely different from the majority Han Chinese, and they have more in common with other nomadic groups such as the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks, who live in Central Asia. Their cooking has been influenced by Mongol, Turkish, Persian, and Chinese cooking, synthesizing elements from West and East. Uighur cuisine, like cuisines in northern China and Central Asia, is based predominantly on mutton (pork is not eaten by Muslim Uighurs).

Foodstuffs

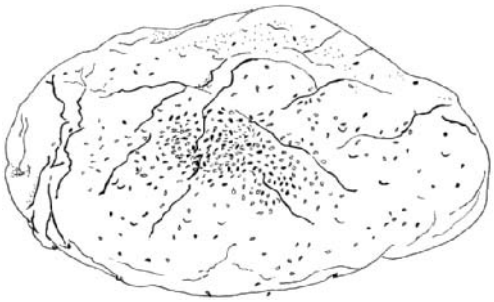
- Staples: mutton, wheat, rice.
- Beef, horse, camel, chicken and other poultry (quail), dried meats, sausages, dairy products (yogurt, curd).
- Carrots, onions, bell peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, eggplants, pumpkin (very limited variety).
- Melon, grapes, pomegranate, fig, quince, apple, strawberry, walnut, almond.
- Seasonings: black pepper, cumin, coriander (seed and leaf), red chili pepper.

Typical Dishes

- Hand-made wheat noodles with meat and vegetables, with or without soup.
- Salads of raw and cooked vegetables.
- Roast/grilled mutton, goat.
- Meat-filled dumplings: steamed (*manty*), boiled (*chuchura*), baked (*samsa*).
- Clay-oven baked and steamed breads (*non*, *nan*), with or without meat filling.
- Sweets: ice cream (from camel or other milk), yogurt with fruit syrup on shaved ice.
- Drinks: black and green tea with salt or sugar, butter, sour cream; rose-hip tea; fermented dairy drinks (*airan*, *koumys*); fruit wines (pomegranate, quince, fig, berries).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Meals are eaten with the fingers of the right hand only.
- Breakfast: flat bread, salty milk tea, curd or yogurt.
- Lunch: dumplings, kebab and flat bread, noodles.
- Dinner: soup; *laghman* noodles with vegetable sauce; *polo* (flavored rice).
- Snacks: meat-filled dumplings, noodles with or without soup, fresh or dried fruits with tea, boiled or roasted corn on the cob.



FLAT BREAD

Flavored Rice (Polo)

Among the Uighurs, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tajiks, and other nomadic central Asians, flavored rice is commonly made with mutton, carrots, raisins (or other dried fruit), and onions. A small amount of one or two of the following, not all, may be added, as the flavor is not meant to be spicy or overpowering—garlic, cumin, barberry, or coriander. While names vary from *pilaf* and *plov* to *polo*, all come from a similar linguistic root. Methods of cooking may also differ. Some cook the meat separately from the rice and vegetables, only adding meat toward the end of cooking or during serving. The traditional method of cooking is with rendered mutton fat together with the crisp crackling that results from slowly melting the fat, thus enhancing the texture of the dish. Nowadays, locally produced cottonseed oil or sunflower oil are more commonly used. This recipe has reduced the quantity of oil usually called for.

The dish is typically eaten with the fingers; thus in Xinjiang its Chinese name is *zhua fan* (claw or "finger" rice). Serve with flat bread and a simple salad of sliced cucumber and tomatoes.

½ cup oil
2 pounds lamb or mutton with bone preferred (or substitute chicken legs and thighs or beef ribs)
5 carrots, peeled and sliced into thick strips
2 onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
½ cup water
2 cups rice
boiling water
1 cup seedless raisins or dried apricot halves, washed and drained

Heat a wok or heavy covered saucepan over medium heat till very hot; add oil.
Add meat and brown on all sides; remove and set aside.
Stir in carrots, onions, and garlic; fry for 2–3 minutes.
Turn down heat. Add ½ cup water, cover, and let simmer for 10 minutes.
Stir in rice; add boiling water to cover the rice by about 1½ inches.
Place meat on top of rice. Add raisins.
Cover and let simmer for 30–40 minutes, until rice is tender.
Place cooked rice in a mound at the center of an individual plate.
Arrange one or more pieces of meat against the rice.
Serve with the following salad.

(*continued*)

Salad

1 cucumber, sliced
2 tomatoes, diced
½ onion, chopped
3 TBS cilantro, chopped
salt to taste
¼ cup plain yogurt

Mix all ingredients in a bowl.

Boiled Meat Dumplings (Chuchura, Ququra)

These meat dumplings resemble wontons, except that these are made with mutton or lamb, not pork. They are commonly eaten for a midday or evening meal, or as a snack.

2 cups flour
1 cup water
1 egg
½ tsp salt
4 cups beef or chicken broth
½ cup plain yogurt
¼ cup green onions, chopped

In a bowl, mix flour, water, egg, and salt into a dough.
Knead for 10–15 minutes until smooth and elastic.
Let rest for 20–30 minutes or longer, covered with a damp towel.
On a floured surface, roll out dough into a log about 2 inches in diameter.
Cut log crosswise into ½-inch slices.
On a floured surface, roll out each slice into a circle, about 4 inches in diameter; keep the middle slightly thicker than the edges.
Place a teaspoon of filling in the center of each circle.
Fold the edges of the circle together, forming a crescent.
Bring the two pointed ends of the crescent together and seal.
You will end up with a vaguely doughnut-shaped dumpling.
Repeat for the remaining dough and filling.
In a large pot, boil 10 cups water and 1 teaspoon salt.
Slip 5–8 dumplings into the boiling water, depending on the diameter of the pot; do not crowd them.
Let dumplings cook for about 5–7 minutes after floating to the surface.
Distribute cooked dumplings among individual bowls.
Heat beef broth to boiling; ladle over dumplings; add a dollop of yogurt.
Garnish with green onions.

Filling

1 pound ground lamb, mutton, or beef
1 onion, finely chopped
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 TBS water

Mix thoroughly all the ingredients until smooth. Set aside.

Pancake (Nang)

Nang is an Uighur staple, one among the more than forty types of bread commonly eaten.

½ cup plain flour
¼ cup cornstarch
¼ cup sorghum flour (available from health food or specialty stores)
4 green onions, green part only, minced
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
1 tsp sesame oil
salt to taste
1 TBS toasted sesame seeds
butter to grease pan

Mix all ingredients except butter (a few lumps are not a problem) to a thick batter.
Heat a thin film of butter in a heavy frying pan on medium heat.
Pour a layer of batter, about ⅛-inch thick, into the pan.
Cook until bubbles form.
Turn cake over and fry until the edges are crisp.
Serve with grilled or fried mutton, or a salad.

Deep-Fried Dough Twists (Sanzi)

Sanzi are a favorite snack, sold by street vendors almost everywhere. During festivals, every Uighur family makes *sanzi* to treat guests.

1 cup flour
1 tsp ground Sichuan pepper (or, more properly, 1 TBS juice from fresh Sichuan pepper berries if available)
water as needed
1 TBS vegetable oil
½ tsp salt
oil for deep-frying

Mix flour and pepper.
Add sufficient water to form a dough.
Add oil and salt and mix well.
Knead dough for 5 minutes in bowl, then 15 minutes on a floured board until it is smooth and elastic. Let rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour, covered with a damp cloth or towel.
Divide dough into 12 pieces.
Take each piece of dough and roll it into a very thin stick, about the thickness of a pencil.
Fold the stick in half, and twist the two pieces together into a braid.
Heat oil to 370°F.
Fry twists in oil until golden.
Drain on paper towels. Serve hot with black or green tea.

(*continued*)

Note: Sichuan (or Szechwan) "pepper" is the fruit of the mountain ash and is unrelated to either black pepper or chilies. The fresh berries of the small tree are squeezed to extract a juice, which is used in cooking in western China, but is probably unavailable elsewhere. You can substitute dried Sichuan peppercorns, available at all Chinese stores.

Pumpkin or Squash Sweet (Kawa)

This is a common sweet that goes well with black or green tea for a snack or dessert.

2 pounds pumpkin or squash (acorn or butternut), cut into 4 equal wedges, peeled, cleaned, and washed
3 TBS melted butter
½ cup toasted almond flakes

Place pumpkin or squash on a buttered baking tray.
Brush half of butter all over pumpkin.
Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 25–35 minutes, or until very tender (a skewer or knife should go easily through the flesh).
Remove pumpkin from the oven and brush with the remaining butter.
Place pumpkin in a shallow serving dish.
Spoon apricots, raisins, and syrup over pumpkin.
Garnish with almond flakes.

Dried Fruit Syrup

1 cup dried apricots, washed and soaked overnight in 4 cups cold water
½ cup seedless raisins or pitted dried cherries, washed and soaked with the apricots
grated rind and juice of 1 lemon or 2 limes
sugar

In a covered saucepan, bring to a boil the soaked fruits with water to cover.
Allow to simmer for 10–15 minutes, or until apricots are tender. Add more water to cover fruits if necessary.
Add sugar to taste if desired.
Turn off heat; add lemon or lime rind and juice.
Allow to cool, then refrigerate for about 30 minutes.

UKRAINE

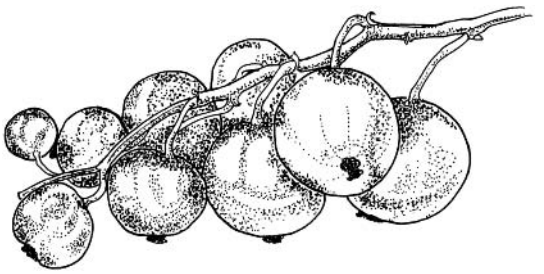
The Ukraine used to be a center for East Slavic culture until invaded by the Mongols, threatened by Turks, Lithuanians, and Poles, and controlled by the Soviets until independence in 1991. Most of the land is fertile and arable, and with a temperate climate, wheat and other cereals, vegetables, fruits, and livestock are raised. Ethnic Ukrainians make up most of the population, with minorities of Russians, Belarusians, Moldavians, Crimean Tatars, and other Eastern European ethnic groups, including Jews. Ukrainian cuisine is rich, showing influences of Turkish, Tatar, Polish, Hungarian, and neighboring countries' cooking. It is typified by a wide range of grain-based foods—dumplings, noodles, breads, pastries—as befits a major wheat producer. Ukraine is also the origin of dishes commonly considered Russian, such as chicken Kiev (named for the Ukrainian capital, now spelled Kyiv) and *borsch* (this is the preferred Ukrainian spelling).

Foodstuffs

- Staples: breads of great variety, noodles.
- Rye, corn, oats, millet, barley.
- Fish (sturgeon, herring, carp, pike), beef, pork, chicken, eggs, dairy products, preserved meats (ham, many types of sausage).
- Potato, mushroom (many kinds), cabbage, pumpkins, squash, zucchini, carrot, pickled vegetables (sauerkraut, cucumber).
- Grape, apple, apricot, plums, cherry, raspberries, black and red currants, strawberry, cranberry, bilberry, other berries.
- Seasonings: dill, parsley, basil, cilantro, onion, sour cream.

Typical Dishes

- Chicken Kiev: stuffed chicken breast, coated with crumbs and fried.
- Stuffed dumplings: boiled, savory and sweet (*varenyky*); smaller mushroom-stuffed *vushka*.
- Potato pancakes, pancakes made with caviar.
- Stuffed cabbage: rice- and meat-stuffed *holubtsi*.
- Soups: *borsch*, a typical Ukrainian beet soup (distinct from Russian due to tomatoes, garlic, pork, beef, and more variety of vegetables); *lopsha*, a chicken and homemade noodle soup.



RED CURRANTS

- Meats: grilled skewered veal (*shashlyk*), fried beef in spicy vegetable sauce (*smazhenyna*). Sausages: smoked *kovbasa*; buckwheat and blood (*kyshka*).
- *Kutya*: Christmas porridge of wheat, poppy seeds, and honey.
- Rich sweet cakes, pastries, fritters, crepes (*nalysnyky*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: eggs, sausage, toast or oatmeal porridge, fresh vegetables (cucumber, tomato, radishes, green onions, dill), fruit, coffee.
- Lunch and dinner are preceded by appetizers of bread, cheese, sausage.
- Lunch: noodle casserole with cheese; fresh vegetables; pickled cucumber or sauerkraut; homemade fruit juice or cherry wine.
- Dinner: *borsch*; roast meat or stewed chicken with vegetables; potato pancakes; sweet fritters (*khrustyky*).
- Drinks: fermented milk (yogurt, buttermilk), birch sap, fruit juices (apple, pear, plum, various berries), *kvas* (fermented drink from bread), fruit wine, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, bottled carbonated drinks, beer, vodka, fruit liqueur.

Noodle and Cottage Cheese Casserole
(Lokshyna, Zapechena z Syrom)

Noodle dishes are very popular, and this one is regularly made by most households. Serve with stuffed cabbage or other vegetable dish for lunch.

4 slices bacon
1½ cups egg noodles, cooked and drained
1 tsp salt
1 cup cottage cheese
1 egg, beaten
⅛ cup heavy cream
4 TBS unsalted butter
¼ cup fine dry bread crumbs

Fry bacon until brown and crisp.
Crumble coarsely; combine with its fat in a large mixing bowl.
Add noodles and ½ teaspoon salt; gently but thoroughly mix using two forks.
In another bowl mix cheese, egg, cream, and remaining salt.
Lightly butter a 2-quart baking dish.
Spread a layer of noodles.
Top with half the cheese mixture.
Spread another layer of noodles, then cheese, ending with a layer of noodles.
Melt remaining 3 tablespoons butter.
Stir in bread crumbs to absorb butter.
Sprinkle buttered crumbs over noodles.

Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 30 minutes, or until crumbs are golden brown.
Serve immediately.

Hussar Roast (Gusars'ka Pechenja)

Hussars, a type of cavalrymen, were apparently great trenchermen and served in the Czarist armies for centuries. This is a simplified version of the original dish, and is eaten for the evening meal. Serve with sauerkraut or other vegetable side dish.

⅓ cup vinegar
1½ pounds beef rump or chuck
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 TBS butter, melted
1 medium onion, quartered
½ cup meat stock

Heat vinegar just to boiling.
Carefully pour all over the meat in a bowl. Allow to soak for 30 minutes.
Drain meat; discard vinegar.
Mix flour, salt, and pepper; coat meat with seasoned flour, reserving 2 tablespoons.
Heat butter in a heavy saucepan or a Dutch oven.
Add meat and brown on all sides, for about 7–10 minutes.
Stir in onion and stock; cover.
Simmer until meat is cooked but still firm, about 1½ hours.
Slice meat into 1-inch-thick pieces.
Re-assemble meat slices to form a "roast"; loosely tie together with kitchen string (these will be tightened later so use an easily unravelled knot).
Place stuffing in between slices; tighten string around meat.
Return stuffed meat to pan.
Sprinkle with remaining seasoned flour.
Cover; simmer at low heat for 30–40 minutes, or until well heated through.

Stuffing

1 TBS butter
1 medium onion, minced
2 TBS dry bread crumbs
1 TBS flour mixed with ¼ tsp salt and ¼ tsp black pepper
1 egg, beaten

Heat butter; stir in onion and fry until soft.
Stir in bread crumbs and seasoned flour.
Remove from heat.
Stir in egg and mix well.

Stewed Chicken (Chakhokhbili)

This is originally a Georgian dish, that has become a popular dish for dinner or weekend lunch, making use of summer herbs. It is served with boiled potatoes, noodles, or plain rice.

2 TBS butter
4 large portions chicken, thighs and legs or quarters (about 2–3 pounds)
2 onions, finely chopped
1 pound tomatoes, peeled and chopped (or 2 cups canned chopped tomatoes)
3 TBS cilantro, chopped
2 TBS fresh mint, chopped
2 TBS fresh summer savory, chopped
2 TBS basil, chopped
salt and black pepper to taste

Heat butter over medium heat in a heavy saucepan with tight-fitting lid.
Brown chicken all over in hot butter.
Add onions; cover and reduce heat, cooking until onions are softened, for about 10 minutes.
Stir in tomatoes; simmer for 20–25 minutes, until chicken is tender.
Stir in herbs, salt, and pepper.
Simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve immediately.

Christmas Wheat Porridge (Kutia, Kutya)

This is traditionally served as the first dish of the Christmas Eve supper in crystal goblets. Garnish with sliced candied cherries. Some add a touch of fruit liqueur.

2 cups whole-wheat grains (available from health food or specialty stores)
3 quarts water
1 cup poppy seeds
2 cups boiling water
⅓ cup honey, dissolved in ¾ cup hot water
⅔ cup sugar
½ cup toasted walnuts or almonds, chopped
1 apple, cored and diced, tossed with 1 TBS lemon juice to prevent browning
5 candied cherries, sliced, for garnish

Put wheat in a baking pan in a thin layer.
Place in a 250°F oven to parch for 1 hour, turning occasionally.
Rinse; soak in cold water overnight.
The next morning, bring wheat and water to a boil.
Reduce heat; simmer for 3–4 hours, until kernels burst open. Remove from heat and cool.
Scald poppy seeds in boiling water. Simmer for 3–5 minutes. Drain and cool.
Grind poppyseeds fine in food processor.
Combine honey and sugar.
Once all ingredients have cooled, combine in one covered container; add apple and nuts.
Chill in refrigerator.
Serve cold in wine glasses garnished with candied cherries.

Stuffed Dumplings (Varenyky)

This is a classic of Ukrainian cooking. "Varenyk" is the singular. It is eaten at any time as dessert or as a snack, and there are numerous local and personal variations. Other fillings than those given here are a savory one of mashed potato with chopped pickled gherkin, and a sweet one of strawberries with a bit of sugar and lemon juice. A convenient alternative to making your own dough is to buy readymade round wonton wrappers or fresh lasagna sheets.

2 cups flour
½ cup milk
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp salt
2 egg whites, beaten to a froth
5 TBS melted butter, hot
4 quarts lightly salted boiling water

Mix flour, milk, egg, and salt until they form a ball of soft dough.
Dust dough with flour, cover with a damp towel, and chill for 30 minutes.
Roll out dough about ⅛-inch thick on a lightly floured surface.
Cut out 3-inch circles with a cookie cutter. Cover circles loosely with a clean moist cloth so as not to dry out.
Gather cutout dough; roll out, and cut out more circles until dough is used up.
Lightly brush each circle with beaten egg white.
Place 1 tablespoon of filling on one half of a dough circle.
Fold dough over the filling to make a crescent. Seal the edges firmly by crimping with a fork to prevent the filling from seeping through during cooking.
Set aside, loosely covered with a towel, until ready to cook.
Bring water to a rolling boil.
Slide in dumplings, a few at a time; simmer uncovered for 8 to 10 minutes, timing after they float to the surface.
Remove with slotted spoon and transfer to a warmed platter.
Keep cooked dumplings warm in a low oven.
To serve, arrange dumplings on a warmed platter.
Drizzle with hot melted butter.

Cheese Filling

1 pound large-curd cottage cheese
½ TBS sugar
1 egg yolk
1 TBS butter, softened
½ tsp salt
2 cups sour cream

Puree cheese in a food processor or food mill.
Mix in thoroughly sugar, yolk, butter, salt, and sour cream.
Taste and add additional sugar, if desired.

Cherry Filling

1½ pounds fresh sour cherries, pitted (or substitute 1 16-ounce can cherries in light syrup and use directly as filling)
⅓ cup sugar

(*continued*)

Mix fruit and sugar.
In a nonreactive pot (not aluminum) simmer at very low heat just until berries are swimming in juice, or microwave (800 watts) on high for 5–7 minutes.

Blueberry Filling

2 cups blueberries
4 TBS sugar
1 TBS lemon juice, strained

Mix fruit and sugar.
In a nonreactive pot (not aluminum) simmer at very low heat just until berries are swimming in juice, or microwave (800 watts) on high for 5–7 minutes.
Stir in lemon juice; cool.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

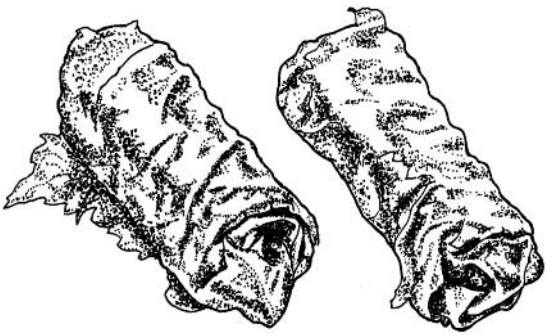
The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a federation composed of seven oil-rich states—Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Al Fujayrah, Ash Shariqah, Dubai, Umm al Qaywayn, and Ras al Khaymah—was unified in 1972. The terrain is largely desert with cooler temperatures in the eastern mountains. Dates, fruits and vegetables, camels and other livestock are raised. The sea is a major food source, as is imported food from around the world. The population is largely Muslim Arab with many contract workers from the Indian subcontinent. Cooking in the UAE reflects Arab and Middle Eastern (Lebanese) elements; dried lime is a popular flavoring.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, many types of flat bread.
- Fresh and dried seafood and fish of all kinds; lamb, camel calf, chicken, dairy products (sheep's, goat's milk); imported exotic meats/fish/seafood.
- Eggplant, pumpkin, zucchini, cucumber, tomato, cabbage, preserved olives; imported vegetables (e.g., asparagus).
- Mango, citrus, melons, nuts (almond, pine); imported fruits.
- Seasonings: dried lime, onion, garlic, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, nutmeg, fennel, cardamom. *Bezar* is a popular spice blend (includes cumin, fennel, cinnamon, and other spices).

Typical Dishes

- Stews of camel, goat, or lamb with vegetables.
- Rice dishes with meat or seafood and vegetables, garnished with nuts and raisins: lamb with spiced rice (*makbous*), saffron rice (*aash mazafran*).
- Stuffed vegetables: grape leaves (*warak enab*), zucchini (*koussa makhshi*).
- Roast/grilled meats, fish: skewered meats (*kebab*), layered meats (*shwarma*), chicken *taouk* (chicken marinated in sesame sauce and garlic).
- Shrimp or crab dishes: spicy shrimp (*murabyan*), boiled crabs.
- Chickpea dishes: *falafel*, dip (*hummus*).
- Salads: bulghur and vegetable (*tabbouleh*).
- Sweets: puddings made with tapioca or rice; rice cakes; custard.



STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Traditional meals are eaten by the entire family sitting around a common dish of rice and meat or vegetables, eaten with the right hand only. Male and female guests eat separately.
- Breakfast: rice pudding flavored with saffron; camel's milk; strained yogurt (*labneh*); dates and nuts; coffee/mint tea.
- Lunch: grilled skewered chicken, lamb, or beef (*kebab*) with salad; *hummus*; mashed eggplant salad; flat bread (*khubz*); yogurt drink or buttermilk; after lunch treat—shisha (waterpipe).
- Dinner: lamb stewed with spices and vegetables (*laham murraq*); rice; accompaniments of dates, radishes, chives, and other chopped fresh vegetables; yogurt drink; date sweet; coffee.
- Snacks: freshly made flat breads with *hummus* or cheese; pizza; burgers; bottled drinks.
- Drinks: coffee (black and bitter), mint tea (sweet), yogurt drink, rosewater-flavored drink (*sharab*), bottled carbonated drinks. Alcohol (highly taxed) served in hotels/restaurants for non-Muslims.
- Hotels and restaurants, many catering luxury foods, serve all kinds of international food: Italian, Chinese, Thai, Indian, Japanese, continental, American fast food.

Yeast Pancakes (Khameer)

These flat cakes are served for breakfast or supper, accompanied by butter, cottage cheese (*chami*), honey, dates, or eggs. Drink with mint or plain sweetened tea, or coffee.

1 TBS yeast
3 TBS warm water
2 cups all-purpose four
2 eggs
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup powdered milk
¼ cup oil
½ tsp ground fennel
½ tsp saffron dissolved in 1 TBS water
½ tsp cardamom
½ tsp salt
½ (or more) cup warm water
1 beaten egg and ¼ cup sesame seeds for topping

Dissolve yeast in warm water and a pinch of flour; leave in a warm, draft-free place until frothy, for about 10 minutes.

Mix yeast mixture, flour, eggs, sugar, milk, oil, spices, salt, and enough warm water for a soft dough. Knead five minutes. Return to bowl. Cover with damp clean cloth. Place overnight in a warm, draft-free area.

Heat a heavy iron frying pan over low heat.

When pan is moderately hot, spread ¼ cup of dough using a moist wooden spatula to make a pancake ¼-inch thick; cover pan.

When bubbly on top, brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
When cake is browned underneath, set aside.
Cook remaining dough in same fashion.
Place cakes on a baking tray; put under medium-hot grill to brown tops.
Serve immediately.

Festive Rice (Al Koodhy)

Imported rice, mostly from Iran (and now from South and East Asia), is considered a desired food throughout Arabia. Almost no festive dinner would be complete without rice. Serve this with a meat or fish dish for a midday or evening meal.

4 servings plain, cooked long-grain rice
2 TBS olive oil
2 TBS blanched slivered almonds
2 TBS pine nuts
½ pound ground beef or mutton
salt, black pepper to taste
1 tsp allspice
¼ cup butter
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg

Fluff up cooked rice with a fork.
Heat olive oil in large pan or wok; sauté almonds and pine nuts for 1–2 minutes, stirring frequently until light golden. Remove and drain.
Brown meat in the same oil, season with salt and pepper, and add half the allspice.
Remove from the pan and drain the oil. Reserve the meat and keep warm.
Heat butter; stir in rice, cinnamon, nutmeg, and the remaining allspice. Add reserved nuts.
Keep stirring to mix well.
Taste and adjust seasoning.
Place rice on a wide dish or tray.
Cover with meat.
Serve at once.

Truffle Stew (Yakhnit el Kama)

Middle Eastern truffles are not related to the true truffle. They are found throughout the Middle East growing under the sand. Some can be bought canned from Tunisian stores. *Kama* tend to incorporate a lot of sand, so it is best to cut them up and remove as much sand as possible.

2 cups meat, cubed
2 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
½ cup onions, minced

(*continued*)

2 cups *kama* (truffles), cubed and well rinsed (or substitute mushrooms)
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 tsp flour blended with 1 TBS water
2 tsp lemon juice or 1 tsp *sumac* spice

Brown meat in a saucepan in hot ghee.
Add onions and cook until light brown.
Add truffles and season to taste.
Simmer covered for 10–15 minutes, or until tender. Do not overcook.
Thicken sauce with flour mixture.
Drizzle lemon juice or scatter with *sumac*.
Serve hot with rice.

Date Sweet (Rangina)

Dates are the UAE's most prolific crop. They are eaten almost daily, fresh or dried, accompanying most meals as side dishes or as ingredients for sweets.

½ cup butter
¾ cup flour
½ cup milk
1 tsp cardamom powder
1 pound fresh dates (Halawy, Khadrawi, or Madjool, not the dry varieties), pitted and sliced lengthwise

Melt butter in a heavy saucepan; stir in flour.
Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the flour turns golden brown. Do not burn.
Slowly incorporate milk, 1–2 tablespoons at a time to make a thin sauce. Add more milk if needed for desired consistency.
Remove from heat; stir in cardamom.
Allow to cool slightly, stirring occasionally.
Arrange dates in individual serving dishes.
While milk mixture is still warm, pour over dates.
Cool to room temperature.
Serve with mint tea or coffee.

UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom comprises two kingdoms (Scotland and England), a principality (Wales), a duchy (Cornwall), and various jurisdictions and colonies throughout the world. Originally settled by Celts and invaded by Romans, Germanic tribes, Vikings, and French, these territories began to be unified from the thirteenth century and, finally in 1927, Northern Ireland was added. England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, with mostly rolling hills and plains and temperate climate, and Scotland, with a colder climate, produce wheat and other cereals, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. Many food items are also sourced worldwide. The British population is predominantly English, with minorities of Scots, Welsh and Irish, black Afro-Caribbeans, Indians, Pakistanis, other Asians, mixed, and other ethnic groups. The United Kingdom has a varied cuisine based on French, Germanic, Scandinavian, and Celtic elements, with influences from immigrant groups, most particularly Indian, Italian, and Chinese. Each region has a slightly different cuisine, but most main meals comprise meat and two kinds of vegetables. British food has a reputation of being bland and uninteresting, which may not be totally undeserved when eating in standard restaurants. However, contemporary food fashion and media are bringing in worldwide trends, such as Japanese *sushi* and Thai food, and a rediscovery of good traditional British dishes. Many pubs throughout the country now serve international or fusion food, alongside traditional fare, prepared with a greater attention to quality and use of high-quality, seasonal regional ingredients. British professional chefs are also gaining a worldwide reputation in innovative cooking. The most typically British foods are represented by a rich repertoire of baked goods and steamed puddings, mostly sweet but also savory, of flour or breadcrumbs, butter or suet (animal fat), and fruits and nuts. These confections and their methods of preparation have become incorporated in the cuisines of its former colonies, notably the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and in the Caribbean and Africa, and have been given new identities by the inventive use of locally available ingredients.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: potato, bread, pasta.
- Beef, chicken, pork, lamb, fish, eggs, cheese of cow's, sheep's, and goat's milk (many regional kinds of excellent quality, including veined Stilton, sharp cheddar, Caerphilly, Cheshire, double Gloucester, Wensleydale, Warwickshire truckle).
- Beans, peas, asparagus, cabbage, broccoli, carrot, turnip, parsnip, mushroom; exotic vegetables (imported).
- Apple (many varieties), plum, pear, strawberry, raspberry, other berries; imported exotics.
- Seasonings: onion, sage, thyme, parsley, leek, pepper, nutmeg, curry powder. Table sauces: mustard (hot and sharp), horseradish, Worcestershire (a blend of tamarind, anchovy, and various spices).

Typical Dishes

- Roast meats, especially beef, pork, chicken. Preserved meats: ham, bacon, sausage (including chunky Cumberland). Variety meats (faggots: baked meatballs of liver and kidney).
- Indian-style dishes: spicy *chicken tikka masala* (most widely eaten restaurant dish).
- Italian-style pizza, pasta.
- Chinese-style noodles, stir-fries.
- Preserved fish: kippers
- Stews and soups of meat and vegetables.
- Sweet and savory pies: apple; steak and kidney; raised pork (most renowned for its quality is made in Melton Mowbray in the East Midlands).
- Pickles: beets in vinegar; chutney; whole onions.
- Baked goods of great variety: bread, cake, biscuit, fruit crumble.
- Steamed puddings, savory (steak and kidney) and sweet (the latter a very extensive range, of fruits and nuts, traditionally made with animal fat or suet)
- Citrus-flavored sweets: lemon curd, lemon tart, lemon drizzle cake, orange marmalade, Sussex pond pudding (a steamed sweet with a whole lemon in the middle).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Few modern families eat meals together, except for Sunday roast dinner (eaten at midday). Table settings are European standard. TV dinners (bought frozen prepared individual meals, warmed up at home, eaten while watching television) are common. The British eat with fork and knife; the fork is kept in the left hand throughout the meal and is not switched to the right after food is cut (unlike American custom).
- Breakfast: light—cereal and milk; toast, marmalade, butter. "Full English" or "fry-up"—eggs, bacon or ham, beans, potatoes, bread, tomatoes, mushrooms, all fried. Regional—smoked/preserved fish (kipper, herring), fried kidney; coffee/tea, juice.

- Lunch (light meal at midday): sandwich of ham, cheese, or egg on buttered white or brown bread; ploughman's lunch (sandwich of cheese and onion pickle or chutney); jacket (whole baked potato) potato with cheese or tuna topping; juice, coffee/tea.
- Dinner (heavy meal, eaten at midday or evening): "Meat and two veg"—roast beef or pork; steamed or roast potatoes; steamed broccoli, carrots, peas; Eve's Pudding (apple cake) with poured cream or custard; a selection of cheeses (usually very old Stilton with port, for a celebration dinner such as Christmas); tea/coffee.
- Evening meal (light meal in the early evening/late afternoon called supper or tea): beans on toast, eggs, milk tea. Alternatively, cottage pie, vegetables, fruit.
- Dessert (called "pudding," or "pud" for short) is usually served with poured cream or egg custard.
- Snacks (tea breaks at mid-morning, mid-afternoon): milk tea/coffee, sweet pastry or chocolate bar, banana, sandwich (e.g., of butter and Marmite—a fermented vegetable-based dark-brown salty spread, tasting almost like solid soy sauce or Japanese *miso*, developed during World War II and provoking intense liking or aversion; an Australian version is Vegemite).
- Going to the pub for a drink, one or more evenings a week, is a common way of socializing for young adults of both sexes and older males (in their neighborhood).
- Eating out or getting take-away food is very common, in particular "going for a curry or Chinese" in the Midlands (the region in the center of England with a high immigrant population) and the Northern regions. London and other larger cities and towns have a range of eating places, including Michelin-starred establishments renowned for their gourmet quality cooking, serving French, Italian, Japanese, Thai, Chinese, and other international or fusion food.
- Drinks: tea with milk; coffee; hot chocolate; homemade elderflower cordial or champagne, or elderberry wine (made of the flowers and berries gathered from the wild); ginger beer (nonalcoholic), lemon or orange squash (fruit syrup); local and imported bottled carbonated drinks (in Scotland, a local soda pop—Irn Bru—outsells colas), locally brewed beers and ales, apple cider (alcoholic), local and imported wines.

Glamorgan Sausages (Selsig Morgannwg)

This is not a sausage, but a Welsh way of preparing a substitute. Usually served for breakfast, drunk with milky tea.

1 cup bread crumbs
1 small onion, minced
½ cup yellow cheese, shredded
¼ tsp dry mustard powder
salt and black pepper to taste
4 eggs (2 separated)
1 cup flour, seasoned with salt to taste
stale bread crumbs for coating
vegetable oil for frying

Mix bread crumbs, onion, cheese, mustard, salt, and pepper.
Beat together 2 eggs and 2 yolks; add to bread mixture; reserve egg whites.

(*continued*)

Beat to stiff peaks one egg white; fold into bread mixture for a firm dough.
Add more crumbs or a teaspoon of milk if necessary to get the right consistency.
Shape dough into 12 "sausages"; roll in flour.
Coat in remaining beaten egg white; then roll in bread crumbs.
Heat ¼ inch oil in a frying pan.
Shallow-fry the sausages until golden.
Serve at once.

Scotch Eggs

This makes a light meal when served with a green salad and bread, or a "jacket" (a baked whole unpeeled potato). A vegetarian option is to use a mashed potato mixture instead of meat for wrapping the eggs. Originally Scottish, this is made and eaten throughout the United Kingdom.

⅔ pound pork sausage meat or ground pork
2 TBS mixed fresh sage and parsley, minced
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
1 TBS mustard
4 eggs, hard-boiled, shelled whole
flour for dusting eggs
1 egg, beaten
½ cup bread crumbs
oil for deep-frying

Mix meat thoroughly with herbs, salt, pepper, and mustard.
Divide meat mixture into four portions.
Dust eggs with flour.
Wrap one portion meat to completely cover each egg.
Roll each wrapped egg in flour, then in beaten egg, then in bread crumbs.
Heat oil to moderate heat. Deep-fry eggs 1 or 2 at a time, for 10 minutes.
Remove eggs when golden brown all over.
Cut in half to serve.

Chicken Tikka Masala

This dish is a contemporary creation, allegedly from Birmingham in the West Midlands region, combining traditional Indian spicy grilled chicken (tandoori chicken) with the English passion for gravy. Chicken tikka masala is commonly eaten with rice for a midday or evening meal, but is also a popular filling for sandwiches, not to mention flavoring commercially packaged crisps (what Americans call potato chips), rivaling the all-time favorite salt-and-vinegar. Serve this with a salad or steamed vegetables.

4 portions boneless, skinless chicken breast, cubed
melted butter for basting

Marinade

½ cup yogurt
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 TBS paprika
¼ tsp turmeric
1 TBS *garam masala* (Indian spice blend)
juice of 1 lemon
⅔ tsp salt
¼ tsp chili sauce (optional)
3 TBS oil

Sauce

2 cups tomato paste
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tsp fenugreek powder
1 tsp cloves powder
5 green cardamom pods, seeds only, crushed
¼ tsp salt
3 TBS butter
⅔ cup cream
1 TBS sugar
¼ cup cilantro, chopped

In a blender or food processor, mix all marinade ingredients until smooth.
Coat chicken pieces; marinate refrigerated, covered, overnight.
Thread chicken on skewers.
Roast in preheated oven at 475°F (very hot) for 10–12 minutes, or until done but still moist.
Baste frequently with melted butter.
Prepare sauce: in a blender or food processor, process until smooth the tomato paste, ginger, garlic, fenugreek, cloves, cardamom, and salt. Reserve.
In a saucepan, melt butter over low heat.
Add tomato mixture and cream; simmer for 10 minutes, stirring constantly.
Adjust seasoning; add sugar if too sour.
Stir chicken into sauce.
Sprinkle with cilantro just before serving.

Coronation Chicken

This is another Indian-style dish, widely made for buffets and as a sandwich filling. It was created to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953 (but is also similar to Caribbean versions of chicken salad). Serve with a green salad and bread for lunch or supper.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 TBS curry powder
¼ cup chicken stock
1 tsp tomato paste
juice of ½ lemon

(*continued*)

3 TBS sweet mango chutney or apricot jam
1 cup mayonnaise
3 TBS yogurt
salt, pepper to taste
2 pounds deboned cooked chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces

Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat.
Gently stir-fry onion to soften for 5 minutes.
Stir in curry powder; fry for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in stock, tomato paste, lemon juice, and chutney.
Reduce heat; simmer for 5 minutes.
Remove from heat; strain and let cool.
Mix mayonnaise and yogurt; add to curry sauce. Blend curry and mayonnaise mixture with the chicken pieces.
Adjust seasoning.
Chill for at least 1 hour before serving.

Sausage and Apple Cottage Pie

This is a variation on what used to be made from leftover Sunday roast meat and potatoes. Serve with seasonal steamed vegetables for supper.

1 TBS oil
1 pound pork sausage meat or ground beef
1 onion, finely chopped
4 sage leaves, chopped fine
2 TBS parsley, minced
1 TBS prepared English mustard (sharper than American mustard)
½ cup water
1 TBS flour mixed with 1 TBS water
3 TBS butter
2 TBS (or more) milk
salt, pepper, nutmeg to taste
8 potatoes, peeled, boiled, drained, and mashed
2 large eating apples (tart-sweet), or tart cooking apples, peeled, cored, and thickly sliced

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; fry meat, stirring constantly until brown.
Stir in onion; fry until softened.
Add herbs, salt, pepper, mustard, and water.
Cover; reduce heat to lowest; simmer for 20 minutes.
Stir in flour mixture to thicken gravy; simmer for another 1–2 minutes.
Blend butter, milk, salt, pepper, and nutmeg into mashed potatoes.
The mash should be dry, not soggy.
Lightly butter a 9 × 13 × 2-inch casserole dish.
Place layer of apple slices then of meat.
Cover completely with potato mash.

Smooth top and draw a pattern with a fork.
Place in preheated (425°F) oven for 15 minutes.
Reduce heat to 350°F; cook for 20 minutes more, or until mash is browned at edges and the inside is piping hot.
Serve immediately.

Sausages in Batter (*Toad-in-the-Hole*)

Traditional dishes often have strange names, a form of self-mockery that reflects the British sense of humor. This is served for supper with two kinds of steamed vegetables, usually carrots and peas.

4 ounces plain flour
1 egg, beaten
½ pint milk
1 TBS butter, melted and cooled
8 well-flavored sausages of your choice
oil

In a blender or food processor, blend flour, egg, milk, and butter to a creamy consistency.
Let rest refrigerated for at least 30 minutes.
Before using, quickly blend the mixture again.
Lightly oil a shallow baking dish.
Arrange sausages in the dish.
Bake in preheated 370°F oven for 30 minutes, turning sausages to evenly brown.
Turn oven to high (425°F) for 5 minutes until baking fat starts to smoke.
Immediately pour batter over sausages; continue baking for 40 minutes. Do not open oven door, or batter will collapse.
Batter should rise and curl over the sausages.
Divide into portions, surrounded by vegetables.

Irish Apple and Parsnip Soup

Serve this with soda bread and cheese for lunch, or as a first course.

2 TBS butter
1 onion, chopped
1 pound parsnips, peeled and diced
2 stalks celery, rinsed, dried and diced
2 eating apples (tart-sweet), peeled, cored, and diced
5 cups chicken stock
¼ tsp curry powder
¼ tsp ground mace
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup sour cream or yogurt
4 TBS parsley, chopped

(*continued*)

Melt butter in a saucepan over low heat.
Stir in onion; fry gently until soft.
Add parsnips, celery, and apples; fry gently for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in chicken stock; cover and simmer gently for 15–20 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.
Stir in spices, salt, pepper, and sour cream.
Continue to simmer only until cream is heated through; do not let it boil, or it will curdle.
Ladle into warmed bowls; garnish with parsley.

Welsh Leek Broth (Cawl Cennin)

The leek is an emblem of Wales, said to have been introduced by Phoenicians who came to trade for Welsh tin. This soup, pronounced "cowl," is very slowly simmered for a clear broth. It was once served as two courses: the broth first, then the sliced meat accompanied by vegetables. Serve with bread as a light lunch or first course. This is usually made with a side (large piece) of smoked bacon, called gammon.

6 cups water
1 pound piece of smoked pork shoulder or other large piece of smoked meat or poultry (e.g., smoked turkey or chicken)
4 potatoes, peeled and diced
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 leeks, white parts only, quartered lengthwise, sliced fine
1 cup cabbage, cored and finely shredded
3 TBS fine oatmeal
¼ cup water
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup (or more) parsley

Boil water, and add smoked meat, potatoes, and carrots.
Reduce heat to lowest possible.
Cover and simmer gently for 1-1½ hours; skim foam.
Remove smoked meat; chop into bite-sized pieces and reserve.
Add leeks, cabbage, and oatmeal mixed into a paste with water, to broth; cook for 5–8 minutes.
Return smoked meat to broth.
Taste and correct seasoning (the broth may be salty enough from the smoked meat); simmer until meat is well heated through.
Serve hot in warmed bowls, sprinkled generously with parsley.

Welsh Plum Tart (Tarten Eirin)

Serve this after a meal, with cream or custard, or as an accompaniment to a cup of tea or coffee at mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

1½ cups flour
3 TBS sugar
a pinch of salt
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
a pinch of powdered cloves
a pinch of powdered allspice
⅔ cup butter, diced
¼ cup cold water

Filling

1 pound plums, halved and pitted
4 eating apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
½ cup sugar
1 TBS lemon juice
3 TBS butter, diced

Mix flour, sugar, salt, and spices.
Cut butter into flour mixture until it resembles coarse meal. Add cold water and knead until it holds together (alternatively, the entire process can be done in a food processor).
Divide dough into ⅔ for the bottom crust, ⅓ for the top.
On a lightly floured surface, roll out bottom crust; line a 10-inch pie plate.
Fill with fruit; sprinkle with sugar and lemon juice; dot with butter.
Roll out top crust; place over fruit and crimp to seal. Cut a few decorative cuts in the upper crust, making sure not to pierce through to the bottom.
Bake in preheated 425°F oven for 20 minutes.
Reduce to 375°F; bake for 25 minutes or until golden.
Serve warm.

Eve's Pudding

The apple is considered by the British as their most typical fruit though it is not native; it is a Roman introduction. There are more than 2,000 varieties in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and an apple research station in East Malling, Kent, developed the stocks used worldwide to control the size of apple trees. This pudding is named after Eve, the first (so recorded) to taste it. Serve with double cream poured (not whipped) over or around each individual serving, or with a custard sauce, or both.

1 pound cooking apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
1 pound eating apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
1 TBS lemon juice
1 TBS water
sugar to taste
3 TBS butter

Toss apples in lemon juice, then simmer with water for 5–7 minutes until softened.
Add sugar to taste.
Stir in butter.
Pour into a lightly buttered 2-quart deep soufflé dish.

(*continued*)

Pour sponge mixture over apples.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 35–40 minutes until golden brown.
Serve warm in individual bowls.

Sponge Mixture

½ cup butter
½ cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp grated lemon rind
2 eggs, well beaten
½ cup self-rising flour, sifted

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy.
Stir in vanilla and rind.
Add eggs and flour a little at a time, alternating between the two and mixing in thoroughly each time.
Fold in remaining flour; mix until smooth.

Boiled Pudding (Spotted Dog, Spotted Dick)

This traditional pudding has been a favorite in the British navy since before the days of Admiral Nelson. Puddings, both sweet and savory, are a favorite of British cuisine, and the Pudding Club, a famous dining club, serves nothing but. The "spots" refer to the raisins or currants.

1 cup self-rising flour
a pinch of salt
2 TBS sugar
½ cup shredded suet or butter
1 cup currants or seedless raisins
¾ cup cold water
flour for dusting
pudding cloth: square of clean cheesecloth folded double or triple, or kitchen foil, 12 × 12 inches
large pot of boiling water

In a food processor, blend flour, salt, sugar, suet, dried fruit, and water just until it forms a ball. Do not overmix, or the dough will be heavy.
Remove dough; mold gently into a cylinder 8 inches long.
Dust pudding cloth or foil with flour.
Place pudding in the center and wrap.
Tie or seal ends well, but leave room for expansion.
Lower wrapped pudding into boiling water.
Cover, and boil for 2 hours.
Replenish water as necessary.
Cut pudding crosswise into 2-inch pieces.
Place in warmed bowls.
Serve immediately.
Pass around cream or custard sauce to pour lavishly around pudding.

Deep-Fried Mars Bars (Scotland)

At fish and chips shops there is normally a choice of two or three kinds of fish, as well as chicken. In Scotland, they have gone one step further and invented a fried sweet dish to celebrate a favorite chocolate bar.

1 cup sifted flour
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp baking powder
¼ cup ice-cold seltzer or soda water
4 Mars or other caramel-covered candy bars, unwrapped

Blend flour, egg, salt, baking powder, and seltzer until smooth.
Heat oil in a deep fat fryer to 375°F.
Dip candy bars into batter.
Fry until golden.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve hot.

Irish Fraughan Cake

Fraughans refer to wild blueberries, or bilberries, in Ireland. Serve after dinner with blueberry whipped cream.

½ cup butter
½ cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups self-rising flour, sifted with ½ tsp baking soda and a pinch of salt
1 cup milk
1 cup bilberries (substitute huckleberries or blueberries)

Butter and flour a 9-inch round cake pan.
Cream butter and sugar until light.
Stir in vanilla and eggs.
Mix in flour, alternating with milk.
Stir in bilberries, mixing well.
Pour into prepared pan.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 40 minutes, or until cake tests done.
Serve with fraughan cream.

Fraughan Cream

1 cup whipping cream
1 cup bilberries (or substitute), lightly crushed
2 TBS confectioners' sugar

(*continued*)

Whip cream to soft peaks.
Fold in fruit and sugar.

Scottish Berry Cream (Cranachan)

This traditional dessert calls for a few drops of single malt Scotch whiskey, for which vanilla is here substituted. This can also be frozen as ice cream.

6 TBS oatmeal
2½ cups double cream
3 cups fresh raspberries or strawberries, or other seasonal berries
6 TBS honey
3 TBS vanilla
4 dessert or wine glasses

In a heavy skillet, dry-toast oatmeal until golden brown; remove from heat and leave in skillet to cool.
Whip cream to soft peaks. Add honey and vanilla, and mix well.
Set aside for each glass 6 raspberries or 3 strawberries (sliced) for decor.
Fold remaining berries into cream, crushing a few to release color.
Place 3 berries (or strawberry slices) at the bottom of each glass.
Add cream/berry mixture.
Smooth top; spread with 1½ tablespoons oatmeal.
Garnish.
Chill, covered with plastic wrap, for 3 hours or overnight.
Allow to come to room temperature 20 minutes before serving.

Eton Mess

This is a very old recipe for an easy pudding (dessert) to make during the brief strawberry season. Its name derives from the famous boys' school.

1½ pounds strawberries, hulled and chopped (leave a few whole and unhulled for decor)
2 TBS vanilla
2 cups whipping cream
8 (or more) meringues, crushed
mint leaves (optional)

Blend strawberries and vanilla in a bowl; cover and chill for 3 hours or overnight.
Whip cream to soft peaks; fold in strawberries and meringues.
Taste, and add more meringues if desired.
Spoon into wine glasses or glass dessert bowls.
Top each serving with reserved strawberries and mint leaves.
Serve immediately.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States is a vast country, the third largest in the world. Peopled by Native Americans, colonized in various regions by the French, British, Spanish, and Dutch, it gained independence in 1776. The varied terrain and range of climates provide many crops: native squash, pumpkin, corn, and berries. Abundant fish and wild game (turkey, deer, rabbit) were the basis of Native American food. Subsequent settlers' introductions of pigs, cows, chickens, European and Asian crops, and imported foodstuffs have enormously expanded the range of foods. Americans are predominantly of European descent, with minorities of Native Americans, Africans, Asians, and others. The bases of American cooking are simplicity, ease of preparation, and use of modern equipment, and it has benefited enormously from the contributions of immigrants from almost every country in the world. Above all, what characterizes food in America is the accessibility of an enormous range of foodstuffs to the general public, not just to an elite few.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: bread, potatoes, beef (especially ground), chicken, preserved and fresh pork (bacon, ham, chops).
- Turkey, fish and shellfish, game (venison).
- Corn, beans, pumpkin, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, spinach, lettuce, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, water chestnuts, bean sprouts; imported vegetables.
- Apples and other temperate fruits and nuts (pear, plum, peach, walnuts, chestnuts); citrus and tropical/Mediterranean-climate fruit and nuts (orange, lemon, lime, pineapple, almond, pecan); imported fruits.
- Seasonings: black pepper, chili pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, sage; ketchup; mustard. (See also box "Food Taboos.")

Typical Dishes

- Soups and stews of meat and vegetables, with or without milk: clam chowder, New England boiled dinner, *chili con carne*.
- Roast, fried, or grilled meats and poultry: roast turkey (for celebrations such as Thanksgiving and Christmas), fried chicken, beef steaks, barbecued meats.

FOOD TABOOS

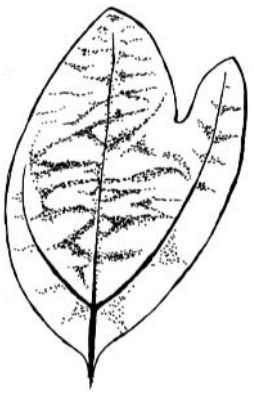
Food taboos—a cultural or social determination that some foods or foodstuffs must not be eaten—is common in virtually all cultures. In the United States, insects, companion animals, and even innards (liver, spleen, kidneys, etc.) of otherwise acceptable animals—all otherwise perfectly edible proteins—are considered taboo and are never eaten (or, at least, eaten with great trepidation) by most of the population. Other taboos include widespread religious taboos among some Buddhists (all meat and fish), Hindus (most meats but particularly beef), Jews (all meat, fowl, and fish except a specific prescribed set), and Muslims (pork and dog). Less well-known taboos include a proscription by the ancient Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras on beans. Many simple societies have taboos on eating animals that are considered totemic—representing or ancestral to the group. In others, certain types of meat or vegetable are taboo in certain seasons, which may have intentional, or unconscious, ecological and preservation objectives.

Taboos are difficult to explain except to note that they may help individuals form strong attachments to their groups. By sharing (or not sharing) certain types of foods, people proclaim publicly that they belong to a specific group.

- Snacks: sandwiches from preserved meats or fish (bacon, ham, hot dog, tuna), fried potatoes (French fries), baked goods (apple or lemon pies, chocolate chip cookies, Danish pastry).
- Sweets: ice cream, fruit pies or salads, rich cakes.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals a day and snacks.
- Eating together as a family is not common.
- Breakfast: usually dry cereal (corn or other) or sweet roll (Danish pastry or croissant), milk, citrus juice, coffee. Substantial leisurely breakfast of eggs, preserved meats (ham, bacon, sausages), pancakes.
- Lunch: sandwich (hot dog, hamburger, tuna, ham, etc.) and potato chips, cold or hot drink; pizza, spaghetti, salad of cold meat and vegetables.
- Dinner: the heaviest meal of the day, with three courses: soup or appetizer; meat or chicken or fish main course; mashed or roast potatoes, accompanying vegetables (carrots, green beans, broccoli); dessert of ice cream, cake, or other baked sweet.
- Snacks: mid-morning, mid-afternoon, late night, usually from fast-food shops.
- Eating out at fast-food chains (owned by huge multinational businesses) or buying prepared food to be warmed or eaten at home is very common.



SASSAFRAS LEAF

Sour Milk Pancakes

Daily breakfast for most people is light, usually a muffin or cereal, so breakfast with homemade pancakes is a special treat, especially for weekends. The sour milk or yogurt produces a tender cake. Pancakes are best eaten immediately, spread with butter, honey, or maple syrup. Crisp bacon or sausage are popular accompaniments, as are fresh brewed coffee or orange juice. Half a grapefruit may be served as well.

1 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
½ TBS sugar
1 egg
1 cup yogurt or buttermilk (or milk soured with 1 tsp vinegar or lemon juice)
2½ TBS melted butter
unsalted butter or cooking oil

In a blender or food processor, process all the ingredients except unsalted butter to a smooth batter.
Heat a griddle to moderately hot, or about 300–325°F; grease lightly with unsalted butter or cooking oil.
Pour out ¼ cup batter for each cake.
Cook until bubbly and golden brown at the edges.
Turn over and cook the other side for another 2–3 minutes.
Keep warm while making the rest.
Serve at once with butter, honey, maple syrup, or strawberry jam.

Relish

A hot dog or sometimes a hamburger (in some cities and states) would not be the same without the traditional accompaniments of relish, mustard, and/or ketchup: in other words, "with everything." Hardly anyone makes homemade relish nowadays. This condiment may be tried for eating with roast meats or poultry, in particular, with turkey, or in sandwiches.

4 celery stalks, cut into 4 or 5 segments
1 medium cucumber, cut into 4 pieces
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, halved
1 green chili pepper (optional), seeded, halved
1 onion, quartered
3 cups water
1 TBS salt
2 cups 5 percent cider vinegar
⅓ cup sugar (or more, depending on individual preference)
1 tsp white mustard seeds
1 tsp celery seeds

In a food processor or blender, process celery, cucumber, bell pepper and chili pepper (if using), and onion till finely chopped (but not pureed).
Into a 4-quart nonreactive (glass or stainless steel) bowl, put chopped vegetables.
Stir in water and salt; let stand for 1 hour.
Pour vegetables into a colander to drain thoroughly for 15–20 minutes; press to remove excess liquid.
In a 4-quart nonreactive saucepan, place drained vegetables.
Stir in vinegar, sugar, mustard and celery seeds.
Heat to simmering point; simmer for 2–3 minutes only.

(*continued*)

Add more sugar, if needed.
Transfer to a covered jar; store in the refrigerator.
Best used 2 days after making.
This will keep for up to 2 weeks refrigerated.

Cheese Meat Loaf

Meat loaf has many variations. To a basic mixture of ground meat, egg, and bread or flour are added onion, green pepper, celery, mustard, ketchup or Worcestershire sauce. The mixture can be free-molded on a shallow tray for a crisp crust, or baked in the usual loaf pan. A layer of ketchup or stock can be laid in the pan for readymade gravy, or the loaf basted during baking. But in whatever form, meat loaf is a well-loved dish for a family dinner, especially when served with mashed potatoes and gravy.

1 cup soda or other crackers
1 green pepper, seeded, quartered
1 onion, quartered
1 egg
1 pound ground beef
¼ pound ground pork
1 tsp salt
½ cup grated cheddar cheese
1½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 TBS prepared mustard
2 TBS tomato ketchup
½ cup cream
⅛ tsp pepper
parsley, for garnish

In a food processor, process crackers until finely crushed.
Add green pepper and onion, and process until chopped but not pureed.
Transfer to a bowl; stir in the remaining ingredients except parsley.
Place into a greased 9 × 13 × 2-inch loaf pan.
Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until done.
Garnish with parsley.

Fried Chicken

Fried chicken rivals hamburgers as the most widely known American food worldwide. The crisp coating and spicy flavoring give this dish its widespread appeal. This recipe is adapted from a Louisiana original and calls for a uniquely Cajun herb: the young leaves of the sassafras tree, known as gumbo filé or filé powder, commonly used for thickening stews such as gumbo, hence the name. Even without this distinctive herb, the quality of the dish is unimpaired.

This is commonly served with potato salad, coleslaw or mashed potatoes, and gravy for dinner or Sunday lunch.

8 chicken drumsticks or 4 large individual portions, quarters, breasts, or whole legs, including thighs (about 2½ pounds)
1 cup flour
1 egg, beaten
½ cup milk
oil for frying
1 (or more) cups milk or chicken stock
3 fresh sage leaves

Prepare chicken 2 hours before frying.
In a large bowl, blend seasoning mix.
Take out 2 tablespoons; sprinkle evenly over chicken.
To remaining seasoning mix, add flour, mixing thoroughly.
In a separate bowl, whisk eggs and milk.
Coat chicken pieces with seasoned flour.
Soak, one at a time, in milk mixture for 2–3 minutes.
Coat chicken again with seasoning flour.
Place on wax paper on a cookie sheet or tray; refrigerate to dry for 1 hour.
Take out 15 minutes before frying.
In a deep fryer or large skillet, heat ⅓ inch oil to 300°F.
Carefully place the coated chicken pieces, a few at a time, to fry until golden brown on both sides, for about 7–10 minutes.
The chicken will not be cooked at this stage; set aside browned pieces.
Leave skillet uncovered for a crisp crust.
Once all the chicken pieces are browned, reduce heat to 200°F (very low), and return chicken to fry.
Cover with a lid only halfway; fry for 30–40 minutes more, or until chicken is done.
Take out chicken to drain on paper towels; keep warm.
Make gravy: drain off all but ¼ cup of oil from skillet.
Heat at low heat.
Add 2 tablespoons of leftover seasoning mix or flour; scrape bits stuck to the skillet.
Whisk in milk or stock, stirring until smooth.
Add sage; continue to simmer for 10 minutes.
Discard sage; pour into a hot gravy boat.
Serve at once.

Seasoning Mix

2 tsp salt
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp white pepper
1 tsp sage
½ tsp cayenne
½ tsp gumbo filé powder (optional)
¼ tsp cloves

Chocolate Fudge Upside-Down Cake

Upside-down cakes are a traditional favorite, with pineapple ones topping the list. This variation combines two popular American flavors: chocolate and

fudge. Serve for dessert, or as a snack with whipped or poured cream, or vanilla ice cream.

1 cup flour
1¼ tsp baking powder
a pinch of salt
2 eggs, separated
¼ cup butter
½ cup sugar
3 squares unsweetened chocolate, melted
1 tsp vanilla
¼ cup milk

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Sift flour with baking powder and salt.
Beat egg whites until stiff.
Cream butter and sugar until light.
Add egg yolks, chocolate and vanilla, mixing thoroughly.
Add flour in 3 portions, alternating with milk in 2 portions, mixing until smooth after each addition.
Fold in egg whites.
Pour batter over topping.
Bake for 40–50 minutes or until cake tests done.
Let cool for 15–20 minutes on a rack.
Loosen edges of cake with a (round-tipped) table knife or cake spatula.
Cover pan with a serving plate at least 10 inches in diameter.
Holding both pan and plate together, swiftly invert cake onto serving plate.
Wait for 5–8 minutes for cake and topping to descend naturally from pan.
Shake cake pan gently, then lift off.
Use a rubber scraper to scoop out any remaining bits of nuts or syrup.
Serve warm with cream.

Topping

⅓ cup butter
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
½ cup light corn syrup
½ cup heavy cream
1 cup chopped almonds or walnuts

In a pan, stir butter and brown sugar over low heat; cook until just bubbly.
Stir in corn syrup and cream; stir constantly just until boiling.
Quickly add nuts; pour into a generously buttered 8-inch bundt or round cake pan. The mixture will be runny. Set aside.

Butter Pecan Praline Ice Cream

While ice cream may have been originally invented in its current form in Italy, nowhere else has ice cream been developed and consumed so widely (almost daily) as in the United States. It is a staple dessert in most households and easily available with a great many choices of flavors combining fruits and nuts. Butter pecan is an all-round favorite. Ice cream is often eaten plain on a cone, outside

the house, or served at the table with a crisp wafer, as well as topped with candied or fresh fruit (cherries, strawberries, banana) and chocolate syrup drizzled over everything for an ice cream sundae or parfait. Not many families make their own ice cream anywhere, but the taste of homemade ice cream is incomparable. Serve for dessert or as a snack.

½ cup sugar
1 TBS flour
a pinch of salt
1 cup milk
2 TBS butter (plus another TBS for greasing)
2 TBS sugar
1 cup pecans
1 cup whipping cream
1 TBS vanilla

Prepare a custard: in a saucepan, blend sugar, flour, and salt.
Stir in the milk with a whisk, until the mixture is smooth.
Over gentle heat and continuing to stir with the whisk, cook the mixture for about 10 minutes, until the milk is hot and the flour is no longer raw-tasting.
Set the pan into a bowl of cold water to quickly chill the custard.
Stir the custard occasionally so that a skin does not form on top. (This can be done the day before and the custard refrigerated.)
Make praline: butter a cookie tray or sheet of foil on a plate, and set aside.
In a skillet, melt butter and stir in sugar.
When sugar is caramelized and turns into a dark brown color, stir in half the pecans, coating all with caramel.
Spread immediately onto buttered tray or foil in a thin layer; leave to cool.
Crush praline with a rolling pin or in the blender; set aside.
In a moderate oven (350°F), toast remaining pecans for 15 minutes.
Let cool; chop finely and set aside.
In a large bowl, whip cream to soft peaks.
Fold in chilled custard and vanilla to mix thoroughly.
Fold in praline and chopped pecans.
If using an ice cream freezer, follow manufacturer's instructions.
Otherwise, place in a covered 4-cup container to freeze for 1½ hours or until sides have started to freeze.
Take out of the freezer, and with hand mixer or fork, beat thoroughly.
Return to the freezer; repeat the beating procedure once more, then allow to freeze thoroughly for 5 hours or overnight.

Fudge Brownies

Sweet baked goods of all kinds mark the British influence in American cooking: bars and cookies being the most commonly and easily made at home. Of these, the brownie is the quintessential American cookie bar. There are many variations. What follows is one that departs from the usual use of butter to suit

contemporary consciousness about saturated fats in cooking. Serve as dessert or a snack with a glass of milk.

¾ cup cocoa
½ tsp baking powder
⅔ cup vegetable oil
½ cup boiling water
2 cups sugar
2 eggs, beaten
1⅓ cups flour
¼ tsp baking soda
1 tsp vanilla
¼ tsp salt
1 cup pecans or walnuts, chopped

Combine cocoa with baking powder in a bowl.
Blend in half of the vegetable oil.
Add boiling water carefully, and stir until the mixture thickens.
Blend in sugar, eggs, and remaining oil, stirring thoroughly until smooth.
Stir in flour, baking soda, vanilla, and salt, mixing well until smooth.
Pour into buttered 13 × 9-inch baking pan.
Top with nuts.
Bake at 350°F for 35–40 minutes.

URUGUAY

Uruguay, the second smallest independent country in South America, was a Spanish colony until independence in 1828. A warm, temperate climate and rolling hills and pasture lands make it ideal for raising livestock as well as a range of grains, fruits, and vegetables. Uruguayans are predominantly of European (Spanish, Italian) descent or mixed, and there is a small black minority. Uruguayan cuisine is rich and combines Spanish and Italian elements as well as influences from neighboring Argentina. Uruguayans are noted for eating the most beef worldwide (surpassing Argentina): over 130 pounds per person per year.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: beef, potatoes.
- Lamb, pork, chicken, fish and seafood, dairy products (cheese, cream), eggs.
- Rice, wheat, corn, barley, sweet potato, cabbage, carrot, cucumber, lettuce.
- Orange and other citrus fruits, grape, apple, strawberry.
- Seasonings: onion, garlic, oregano, thyme, pepper, parsley.

Typical Dishes

- National dish is *parrillada*—a mountain of grilled/barbecued beef, variety meats (liver, heart, etc.), and sausages—on a platter.
- Spicy blood sausages, some flavored with orange peel and walnuts.
- Spanish-style meat and vegetable stews and soups: *puchero* or *cazuela* of vegetables, bacon, beans, and sausages.
- Italian-style dishes: fresh pasta, ravioli, pizza, stews.
- Rich sweets: milk fudge (*dulce de leche*) (see Argentina for the box "Dulce de Leche"); egg-cream candies (*yemas*); lemon pie; ice cream; stuffed cream puffs (*bombas*); sponge-cake balls filled with cream, jam, and peaches (*chaja*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily, with main meal at noon or night.
- Beef is eaten at almost all meals, as steak, barbecued ribs, or cutlets, with mixed salad and fried potatoes.

- Breakfast: croissants (*medias lunas*), orange juice, coffee.
- Lunch: grilled steak sandwich or pasta.
- Dinner: grilled meats, potato chips, vegetable salad, dessert of ricotta-like white cheese (called *requeson*) with quince jam (see Dominican Republic for the box "Asado").
- Snacks: open-faced sandwiches of grilled steak with pickles, lettuce, tomato, cheese (*chivito*); spicy sausage in a roll (*húngaro*); croissants with ham and cheese, served hot or cold.
- Drinks with meals for the young are fresh fruit juices; adults drink white wine mixed with fruit juice, or sparkling wine mixed with white wine, or beer. Tea, *yerba mate*, or coffee are favorite drinks in between meals (see Paraguay for the box "Yerba Mate").

Sausage Stew (Chorizos en Cazuela)

This is popular for a family lunch or dinner, served with fried potatoes or bread.

2 TBS olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
⅔ cup tomato puree
1 8-ounce can chopped tomatoes
2 cups frozen sweet corn
2 TBS fresh oregano, chopped
salt, pepper to taste
1 bay leaf
4 *chorizos* (available in Latin American stores), or Italian-style sausages, cut into 2-inch pieces

In a saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
Sauté onion and garlic for 5 minutes; add bell pepper, tomato puree, and tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.
Add corn, oregano, salt, pepper, bay leaf, and sausages.
Simmer for 25–35 minutes or until sausages are done.
Add water if sauce is too thick.
Serve hot.

Stuffed Beef Roll (Fiambre)

Resembling neighboring Argentina's "hunger-killer" (*matambre*), this beef roll is made into a popular sandwich filling. The beef slices are attractive with their colorful stuffing. Put slices on bread, garnish with pickled cucumbers or relish, and serve as an open-faced sandwich.

⅓ cup grated cheese (Cheddar or Monterey Jack)
5 eggs, beaten
3 TBS butter
1 piece flank steak (2 pounds)
½ tsp salt

½ tsp pepper
1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
½ cup fresh (or frozen, thawed) green peas
5 cups broth

Stir cheese into eggs.
Over medium heat, melt butter in a skillet.
Pour in egg mixture, stirring constantly, until eggs are done but still moist.
Take off heat and set aside.
Season the steak; pound well to tenderize.
Cover surface of steak with cooked eggs, bell pepper, and peas.
Starting at the widest side, roll up like a jelly roll; tie securely with twine.
Roll up tightly in cheesecloth; tie again with twine.
Place in a large saucepan with broth.
Cover, bring to a boil, skim froth, and reduce heat.
Let simmer for 1½ to 2 hours, or until steak is very tender.
Remove roll from stock and set on a tray.
Place a cutting board over the roll. Put some heavy cans on top to help with draining the meat, and let chill in the refrigerator overnight. (The drained broth can be used to make soup.)
Remove cheesecloth and twine. Cut steak crosswise into slices to serve.

Sweet Corn and Bell Pepper Casserole (Tarta de Morrón)

This dish combines locally plentiful ingredients, corn and peppers, and is often served as a light main dish or as a side dish with a meat course.

2 cups flour
¼ tsp salt
½ cup butter
2 yolks
¼ cup cold water
3 eggs
salt, pepper to taste
1 cup yogurt
2 TBS fresh oregano, chopped
½ cup grated cheese

Prepare the crust: in a food processor, blend flour, salt, and butter for 2 seconds to coarse meal stage.
Beat yolks with water. Add to processor in 4 portions, processing for 2 seconds each time or just until the dough forms a ball.
Take out dough, knead lightly and roll out on a floured surface to fit a 12-inch pie plate.
Spoon filling into shell.
Prepare the topping: beat eggs with salt, pepper, yogurt, oregano, and grated cheese.
Pour topping over the filling; bake at 325°F for 45 minutes or until done.

(*continued*)

Filling

2 TBS oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup fresh (or frozen, thawed and drained) sweet corn
1 cup chopped red bell pepper
2 strips lean (back) bacon, chopped

Heat oil over medium heat in a skillet.
Sauté all the ingredients for 5 minutes; set aside.

Uruguayan Marinated Chicken (Pollo en Escabeche)

This method of cooking, called *en escabeche*, is common throughout the Hispanic world, most often applied to fish. There is a slight difference in that fish is first fried and then marinated, whereas here, the chicken cooks in spiced vinegar. This is popular as a family supper dish or main meal starter. It is served cold, accompanied by fried potatoes.

2 TBS olive oil
4 large portions chicken, quarters or legs and thighs, halved (2–3 pounds)
2 carrots, peeled and sliced 1-inch thick
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, quartered
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, quartered
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 onions, sliced in rings
½ tsp each thyme and marjoram
12 whole black peppercorns
salt to taste
½ cup white wine vinegar or other vinegar
¼ cup water

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan; brown chicken over medium heat.
Add vegetables, herbs and spices, salt, vinegar, and water.
Simmer over low heat for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until the chicken is tender.
Remove from heat and let cool.
Discard peppercorns. Chill well.

Baked Fruits with Nut Topping (Gratin de Frutas)

This is a popular sweet after a main meal, and also a snack.

1 pound strawberries
2 bananas
2 TBS lemon juice
2 cups yogurt
4 TBS peach jam
1 cup toasted almonds, chopped
4 TBS brown sugar

Wash strawberries well; hull and cut in half.
Slice bananas, and coat with lemon juice.
Place fruit in a buttered baking dish.
Cover with the yogurt well mixed with jam.
Sprinkle with chopped almonds and brown sugar.
Grill at medium heat for 10–12 minutes, or until topping is golden brown.

UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan is a landlocked central Asian country that was occupied by Russia from the nineteenth century until the breakdown of the Soviet Union in 1991. Though mostly desert with hot summers and warm winters, the country has several fertile river valleys, enabling cultivation of abundant cereals, fruit, and vegetables. Livestock are also extensively raised. Muslim Uzbeks constitute a majority of the population, with Russian, Tajik, and other minorities. Uzbeks were traditionally horsemen and nomads, so their food is similar to that of their central Asian neighbors and is more varied and complex. As in most of central Asia, mutton is preferred, and its fat (especially that of fat-tailed sheep, called *dumba*) is highly prized.

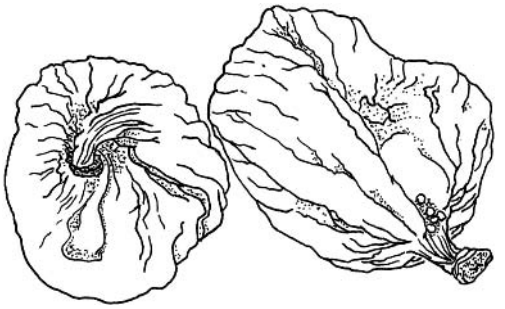
Foodstuffs

- Staples: mutton, dairy products. Uzbeks rarely eat lamb (i.e., young mutton), considering the meat too lean and insipid.
- Wheat, millet, other cereals.
- Beef, horse, poultry, goat, camel, dried and smoked meat, sausage.
- Many types of pumpkin and gourds, eggplant, turnips, olive, unusual colored carrots, bell pepper, cabbage, tomato, potato, spinach, legumes, pickled vegetables.
- Melon, watermelon, apple, cherry, grape, fig, apricot, pomegranate, nuts, citrus, dried fruits.
- Dairy products: yogurt (*katik*), fermented milk drinks (*kumys*, *airon*), clotted cream (*kaymak*), white cheese.
- Seasonings: black pepper, red chili pepper, parsley, coriander (seed and leaf), black cumin, barberry.

Typical Dishes

- The king of all dishes for the Uzbeks is *dumba*: the roasted fat of a fat-tailed sheep native to the region.
- Grilled or roasted meats: *kabob*; skewered *shashlyk*.
- Stews of meat and vegetables (*kovurma*).
- Stuffed grape leaves, cabbage, and other vegetables with rice and meat: *dulma.*

- Noodle dishes with meat and vegetables: *lagman*.
- Flat breads of many varieties, according to region: generically called *lepyoshka*.
- Baked meat-filled dumplings (*samsa*).
- Rice dishes: with meat and vegetables (*palov*), with nuts and/or beans.
- Sweets: *sumalak* (malted wheat syrup), glazed almonds and other nuts; dried melons and apricots, grapes (golden and brown raisins), rich confections of nuts and fat (*kholva*), quince and fig jams.



DRIED FIG

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Flat breads eaten with all meals.
- Breakfast: yogurt or cheese, tea, porridge.
- Lunch: light meal of meat-filled dumplings or noodles; fresh fruit or sweet.
- Dinner: flavored rice (*palov*), grilled meat, salad; stew of meat and vegetables; fresh fruit or sweet.
- Drinks: green or black tea, with or without butter or sour cream; yogurt-based drinks. Tea ritual: As guests arrive, tea is served with a tray (*dastarkhan*) of assorted sweetmeats including fresh and dried fruit—glazed nuts, nut confections, dried melons, rose petal jam, quince or fig preserves, bunches of grapes (whatever is in season).

Cheese-Stuffed Sweet Peppers (Lazzat Salat)

Salads of all kinds made from the wide range of vegetables available are served with meals, flavored with fresh herbs such as dill, cilantro, and green onions. This dish is excellent as a first course or appetizer.

2–4 cups water
4 bell peppers, various colors, cored and seeded from the stalk end, but kept whole
½ cup semi-hard white goat's cheese (brinza or feta), grated
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup butter, softened
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 TBS dill, minced

Bring water to a boil in a deep pot.
Scald peppers in boiling water, one or two at a time, until skin is soft.
Plunge immediately into cold water, then drain to cool.
Mash cheese, sour cream, butter, garlic, and dill until smooth.
Fill peppers with cheese mixture, pressing the filling well to ensure there are no empty gaps; chill for 20–30 minutes.
Slice peppers crosswise into disks to serve.

MUTTON: THE MEAT OF CHOICE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

The populations of the Middle East and of Central Asia have been shepherds for probably longer than recorded history. There is evidence of domesticated sheep and goats in many prehistoric archaeological sites in these areas. Unsurprisingly, mutton is the most popular meat in an area stretching from Morocco to Kazakhstan. Compared to goats, with which they are often herded, sheep have more fat. Since fat molecules hold the flavor in meat, this means mutton is usually more flavorful, and the energy the meat supplies is greater. It is also much softer: an important quality when one's dentistry is not too good, and when fuel is at a premium. In the final analysis, anyone from the area will say it is the flavor: apparently, there is nothing that stirs the digestive juices so well as the scent of mutton fat broiling on coals.

Cabbage Soup (Karam Shurva)

This soup is a welcome dish during the winter, as a light meal with flat bread for lunch or as a first course for dinner.

- 3 TBS vegetable oil
- 1 pound mutton (or beef) with bone, cut in large cubes.
- 1 onion, sliced fine
- 2 carrots, peeled and cubed
- 3 potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 cup tomatoes, chopped (or one 8-ounce can chopped tomatoes)
- 5 cups water
- 2 cups cabbage, shredded
- salt, pepper to taste
- 1 cup your choice of fresh herbs (cilantro, green chives, parsley), rinsed and chopped, for garnish

Heat oil in a large covered pot over medium heat; briefly brown the meat.
Add onion and carrots. Stir-fry until onion slices are soft.
Add potatoes, tomatoes, and water; season and bring to a boil.
Add cabbage and cook, covered, on medium heat until done.
Adjust seasoning. Add water if necessary to thin the soup.
Serve soup garnished with herbs, distributing meat and vegetables equally.

Flavored Rice (Palov)

This Uzbek version of *pilaf* is more elaborate than that found in neighboring countries, with its use of high-priced saffron. While the taste is not the same, powdered turmeric can be substituted to get the same yellow color. A favorite garnish on the mounded rice and meat is red pomegranate seeds. Uzbek *palov* has many variations, according to region and season: with stuffed grape leaves; with garlic; with chickpeas; not mixed, that is, rice is topped with the meat and carrots

sauce (see box "Mutton: The Meat of Choice in the Middle East and Central Asia").

Usually served for the evening family meal, it is also typically served at a *choyhana* (teahouse), a venue of Uzbek social life, where people (mostly men) catch up on local news while sipping tea and eating *palov* and kebabs. For weddings and feasts serving hundreds of guests, it is men who cook the *palov*, although women customarily make it for family meals.

1 pound fatty boneless mutton, cut into chunks (fat included)
2 TBS (or more) vegetable oil
1 pound onions, sliced fine
1 large carrot, peeled and grated coarsely
2 cups rice
3 cups boiling water
1 tsp salt
⅛ tsp saffron (about 15–20 strands), steeped in 1 TBS water for 10 minutes (or ½ tsp turmeric powder)
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp cumin
1 pomegranate, peeled, separated into seeds, or ½ cup dried pomegranate seeds, soaked in water 5 minutes, drained (optional)

Heat oil in a large, heavy pot with a well-sealing lid, over high heat until hazy.
Brown mutton briefly; remove and reserve.
Add onions and carrots to the remaining oil (add more if necessary); stir-fry over medium heat until tender.
Return mutton to the pot; add rice.
Stir constantly for 5 minutes.
Pour in boiling water; mix well.
Stir in salt, saffron, black pepper, and cumin.
Cover tightly and cook over lowest heat for 20 minutes.
Remove from heat, and without uncovering, allow to rest for 10 minutes.
Check rice for doneness. If necessary, return to low heat for an additional 5 minutes, sprinkling some boiling water on top if rice is dry.
Mound rice high on a serving platter. Surround with meat.
Garnish with pomegranate seeds.
Serve hot with salad (combine ingredients listed below).

Salad

1 onion, sliced paper-thin
1 firm tomato, sliced paper-thin
1 TBS vinegar
salt and black pepper to taste

"Sausage" Kebab (Liula Kebab)

These skewered ground meat "sausages" are ideal for cooking on a barbecue for a midday or evening meal. Serve with flat bread, a tart sauce (see next recipe), and salad.

2 pounds ground lamb or beef
1 cup fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
1 tsp salt
1 medium onion, finely chopped
12 stalks green onions, finely chopped
1 TBS black pepper, freshly ground
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ TBS powdered ginger
½ tsp red pepper flakes

In a large bowl, mix thoroughly meat and other ingredients.
Beat with a wooden spoon until mixture is smooth.
Form this mixture into "sausages," approximately 3 inches long and 2 inches in diameter.
Thread sausages onto flat metal skewers leaving an inch space between them. Grill over coals, turning constantly, for 12–15 minutes or until done.

Tart Kebab Sauce

Serve this condiment with kebabs or other grilled or roasted meat dishes. This will keep well, refrigerated in a covered jar, for about 2 weeks.

½ cup jujubes (also known as Chinese dates, though not related to real palm dates), pitted, chopped
½ cup raisins
2 TBS vinegar
1 tsp salt
⅓ cup vegetable oil
1 tsp dried ginger powder
sugar to taste

In a blender or food processor, place all ingredients and blend to a puree.
Pour into a pan and heat at medium heat till bubbling lightly.
Adjust seasoning to taste.
Cool and serve.

Apricot Seed Brittle (Magiz Kholva)

The sweet kernels of a type of apricot are a staple for many Uzbek families. (Note that the seeds of ordinary apricots available in the United States are bitter and contain a toxic chemical, cyanide. It is not recommended to use these common apricot seeds.) The sweet Uzbek apricot kernels are unlikely to be found in the United States, so substitute almonds, which have a similar flavor. Other glazed nuts, such as hazelnut or walnut, are usually served with tea to guests, as a snack or after meals.

1 TBS butter for greasing
1 cup sugar
¼ cup water
1 pound sweet apricot kernels (or substitute almonds, blanched), crushed roughly

Butter a shallow 10 × 12-inch baking tray.
Scatter almonds on the tray in a layer about ½-inch thick. Reserve.
Place sugar in a heavy pan. Heat over low heat until caramelized to a light golden color. Add water carefully (there will be some splattering so protect your hands and stand well away from pan).
Boil down water with sugar, stirring from time to time, until syrup is pale gold and at soft ball stage (234–238°F).
Pour syrup over seeds.
Place tray to dry in a low oven (100°F, a convection oven is best) for 1 hour.
Cut into squares or lozenges and serve with tea.

Sweet Porridge (Kholvaitar)

Traditionally, this sweet porridge would have been made with mutton fat. Serve hot as snack or dessert with flat bread.

1 cup sugar
3 cups water
½ cup vegetable oil
1 cup flour

Boil sugar and water to make a light syrup.
In a separate pan, heat oil, then add flour, stirring constantly until golden brown.
Slowly and while mixing constantly, add hot syrup until the mixture is thick and creamy.

Yogurt Drink (Airon)

Variations on *airon* or *ayran* are served throughout Uzbekistan as a refreshing drink, which is particularly important in desert climates, where salt lost by perspiration must be replenished. The lactic acids present in the drink are also believed to be beneficial to the stomach and add essential vitamins and trace elements to an otherwise predominantly meat diet.

2 cups yogurt (very sour yogurt is most authentic)
2 cups water
salt to taste

Whisk yogurt, water, and salt together and serve on ice.

VANUATU

Vanuatu comprises a group of eighty volcanic islands in the South Pacific Ocean, about sixty-five of which are inhabited. The islands were formerly administered by France and Britain. Most islands have narrow coastal plains circling steep volcanic ridges and, with a tropical climate, enable fruits, vegetables, and pigs and other livestock to be raised, unlike other Pacific islands with shallow soil. Pigs are important not only as an item of diet but also as a cultural symbol of wealth, prestige, and hospitality. The population is predominantly of the Ni-Vanuatu ethnic group, who are Melanesians.

The traditional diet centered on a few locally grown foodstuffs, fish, and seafood, prepared simply. The contemporary diet is much influenced by French, American, Japanese, and Australian tastes and imports.

Foodstuffs

- Staple: root crops (yam, taro, cassava, the latter introduced from the Americas by traders), breadfruit.
- Fish, seafood caught offshore, pork, beef, goat, chicken, eggs, milk produced locally.
- Potato (white and sweet), corn, pumpkin including green leaves, watercress, edible hibiscus leaves.
- Coconut, peanut, papaya, guava, pineapple, mango, passion fruit, local nuts (naval nuts, Indian almond, Polynesian chestnut).
- Seasonings: black pepper, onion, tomato, ginger, coconut milk.

Typical Dishes

- Steamed or baked root crops, bananas, plantain, or breadfruit, with or without coconut milk, wrapped in banana leaves.
- Fish and seafood dishes: coconut crab in garlic sauce. Raw fish marinated with lemon juice and coconut milk. Japanese-influenced raw fish (*sashimi*, *sushi*). Baked fish or seafood, pork, chicken, or beef (in underground oven).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- Breakfast: Westernized style, bread/baguette or cereal, juice or coffee.

- Lunch: rice or traditional staple, fish or vegetable dish with or without coconut milk; or light Westernized quick meal of sandwich, pasta, other fast food in urban areas.
- Dinner: rice or traditional staple; fish, meat, or chicken dish; vegetable dish; fresh fruit or dessert.
- Snacks: Western fast foods (pizza, pasta); Western cakes and cookies; traditional steamed staples with coconut; fresh fruit; fried banana chips.
- International restaurants, bars, cafes, and hotels serve wide range of Western/Asian food: French, Italian, American, Mexican, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Thai.

Peanut Salad

This salad takes advantage of Vanuatu's local products. Serve as an accompaniment to a meat or fish dish. With the addition of hard-boiled eggs, canned tuna, or shredded chicken, this makes a dish for lunch.

½ cup salad greens of your choice, finely shredded
½ cup cucumber, cut into fine strips
1 cos or romaine lettuce, shredded
½ cup firm, semi-ripe papaya, shredded
½ cup grated coconut, preferably fresh or frozen, defrosted
½ cup roasted peanuts, finely chopped
2 tsp oil
juice and rind of 1 lime or lemon
2 stalks green onion, chopped

In a bowl, mix vegetables thoroughly with grated coconut.
Combine peanuts, oil, lime juice and rind, and green onion for dressing.
Pour dressing over vegetables.
Chill for 30 minutes before serving.

Fish Salad

This fish salad resembles South American *ceviche* and is made all over the Pacific islands in several variations. This is a Vanuatu specialty served for lunch or evening meal with a boiled or roasted staple (breadfruit, yam, taro).

2 pounds fish fillet, very fresh, sliced into uniform, bite-sized pieces
1 cup lime juice
½ small, firm, semi-ripe papaya (or 2 peeled carrots), shredded
1 cucumber, diced
1 large, firm tomato, diced
½ cup Chinese cabbage or cos lettuce
1 small red bell pepper, cored, seeded, diced
1 small green bell pepper, cored, seeded, diced

(*continued*)

Coconut Herb Dressing

1 clove garlic, finely minced
3 TBS fresh parsley, finely chopped
2 TBS cilantro, finely chopped
2 stalks green onions, finely chopped
salt, pepper to taste
½ cup coconut milk

In a covered container, lay the fish; pour lime juice on fish.
Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, until all the fish turns white.
Turn the fish over occasionally.
In a salad bowl, mix all vegetables thoroughly.
Blend the dressing ingredients well.
Rinse fish thoroughly with cold water, and drain.
Combine fish with dressing; place over vegetables.
Serve well chilled, ensuring each diner gets equal helpings of vegetables and fish.

Pork-Stuffed Taro

This is served as a special main dish for dinner with mashed or boiled sweet potatoes, breadfruit, or yams, accompanied by a salad or cooked green vegetable. Pork is a celebratory meat.

1 pound large taro tubers or large potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch-thick slices
1 pound ground pork
4 stalks green onions
5 tomatoes, diced
salt, pepper to taste
5 cups coconut milk
2 banana leaves (fresh or frozen, from Oriental stores), or 1 large head Savoy or other loose-leafed cabbage, separated into leaves
baking foil

Hollow out the center of the taro or potatoes, leaving the bottom and walls intact.
Take out the center stalk of the banana leaves, if using.
Lay leaves to cover the bottom and sides of a large rectangular baking dish, about 15 × 10 × 2 inches.
Chop finely the flesh taken out from the taros or potatoes.
Mix chopped tuber flesh with the pork, tomatoes, onion, salt, and pepper.
Fill the taros or potatoes with the filling.
Pour some coconut milk over the leaves in the baking dish.
Lay filled tubers on leaves.
Pour the rest of the coconut milk, drizzling some over the tubers.
Cover baking dish with foil, and seal.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 1 hour.

Coconut Milk Bake (Lap Lap)

This is a common staple dish, traditionally made from scratch, but now available readymade in markets. It is normally wrapped in banana leaves and baked in an earth oven. Serve with a side dish of fish, chicken, or meat. The sweet version can be eaten as an afternoon snack.

2 cups cassava, peeled, cored, and grated (or 2 cups plantains or semi-ripe eating bananas, mashed)
1 cup taro, peeled and grated
1 cup sweet potato, peeled and grated
⅔ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
¼ cup sugar (for sweet version)
2 cups coconut milk
½ head Chinese cabbage, washed and wiped dry
4 sheets of kitchen foil, each 12 × 12 inches

Mix grated roots with salt and pepper or with sugar, as desired.
On each sheet of foil, lay 1 or 2 cabbage leaves.
Spread ¼ cup coconut milk in the center of the leaves.
Place ¼ of the chosen mixture in an even layer over the cream.
Cover mixture with ¼ cup coconut milk.
Carefully bring opposite ends of foil together; fold and seal over mixture.
Repeat for remaining ingredients.
Place foil parcels in a baking tray.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
Serve one parcel placed on a plate to each diner. The diner uncovers the parcel just before eating.

Tropical Fruit Sherbet

This recipe is equally good served chilled as a drink or frozen as a dessert. The original recipe uses juice freshly prepared (on the spot) from fruits.

2 ripe bananas, sliced and sprinkled immediately with 2 TBS lime or lemon juice
2 cups pineapple juice
1 cup papaya or mango nectar or juice
1 cup guava nectar
2 cups water
sugar to taste

In a food processor or blender, place all ingredients and puree.
Place into an ice cream maker, and follow directions for making sherbet.

(*continued*)

Alternatively, freeze in shallow trays (e.g., ice cube trays) for 1 hour.

Remove trays from freezer and beat mixture thoroughly; return to freezer and freeze for 30 minutes.

Beat mixture again and return to freezer until firm.

VENEZUELA

Venezuela, like most South American countries, was a Spanish colony until independence in 1830. It has a varied terrain and climate: tropical lowlands and temperate Andes mountains ideal for the cultivation of a wide range of cereals, fruits, and vegetables, notably coffee. With its coast, it has access to fish and shellfish. Most Venezuelans are of European or mixed African, Amerindian and European origin.

Contemporary Venezuelan cuisine combines Spanish and Amerindian elements, with Italian, Portuguese, and German influence, as well as elements from neighboring Colombia.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: corn, rice, beans, plantains.
- Pork, beef, chicken, fish, seafood, German/Italian/Portuguese sausages and ham, eggs, milk products.
- Pumpkin, potato (white and sweet), cassava, legumes, cabbage.
- Banana, papaya, pineapple, coconut, melon, watermelon, mango, pineapple, guava, citrus, strawberry.
- Seasonings: annatto seeds (for red color and flavor), cumin, capers, cilantro, coconut.

Typical Dishes

- The national dish (*pabellón criollo*): beans and rice with shredded beef, fried plantains, corn on the cob, and other vegetables.
- Spanish-style stews, soups of meat and vegetables: *sancocho*, *hervido*.
- Italian pastas and pizzas: *lasagne* (called *pasticho*).
- Fish dishes: avocado stuffed with shrimp, rice cooked with shellfish, trout-stuffed turnovers.
- Meat dishes: popular tripe stew (*mondongo*).
- Amerindian-style leaf-wrapped and steamed corn pastries with meat or cheese.
- Cornmeal pastry (*hallaca*) filled with meat, green pepper, tomatoes, raisins, olives, garlic, and parsley, and steamed in banana leaves, is a Christmas treat.
- Spanish-style rich sweets: guavas in syrup with cream cheese, strawberries with cream, coconut or egg custard.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- A mashed avocado relish called *guasacaca* is often served with meals.
- Breakfast: corn pancake (*cachapa*) or cornmeal bread (*arepa*) with white cheese; or scrambled eggs with tomato and onion (*perico*); coffee.
- Lunch (the main meal, eaten between noon and 3 p.m.): the national dish of beans and rice with beef (*pabellon*) is common. Corn on the cob, bananas, and cassava always accompany meat (or the main dish), including fried or baked corn bread (*arepa*). In rural areas, families eat lunch together.
- Evening meal: a light meal similar to breakfast, eaten after 8 p.m. or later.
- Snacks (street foods): corn bread (*arepa*) or pancake (*cachapa*) filled with cheese, ham, or meat; fried pastries (*empanadas*); fruits (e.g., papaya; *mammónes* or *guineps*).
- Drinks: fresh sugarcane, passion fruit, coconut, and other tropical fruit juices (*jugo*, *batido*) or milkshakes (*merengada*) are drunk with meals. *Chicha* is a drink made of corn or rice, which can be alcoholic or nonalcoholic. If nonalcoholic, it is flavored with sugar and vanilla. Local wine, beer for adults.

Cheese Sticks (Tequeños)

These fried cheese-filled pastry sticks are popular snacks or appetizers.

2 cups all-purpose flour
¼ tsp salt
1 TBS sugar
5 TBS butter
2 TBS water
1 egg, beaten
1 pound farmer's or any mild white cheese
1 egg white, beaten

In a bowl, blend flour, salt, and sugar.
Rub butter into flour until mixture resembles cornmeal.
Mix in egg, sprinkle with water, and form into a ball.
Knead lightly until smooth. Let rest for at least 30 minutes, covered with a moist towel.
Cut cheese into bars about 2 inches long and ½-inch wide.
On a floured surface, roll out dough as thinly as possible (about ⅛ inch). Cut into strips about 6 inches long and 1-inch wide.
Wrap each dough strip in a spiral around each cheese stick. Start from the bottom and go up, overlapping to ensure cheese is entirely covered, so that none oozes out during frying
Brush *tequeño* with egg white and roll in flour.
Deep-fry in medium-hot oil until golden in color.
Drain on paper towels.
Serve piping hot.

Corn Pancakes (Cachapas de Jojoto)

This is commonly used as bread or wrapper for fried or grilled meat. Serve as an accompaniment to soup, or on its own for supper. "Jojoto" is Venezuelan Spanish for corn on the cob. Kernels freshly sliced from the cob were traditionally used. Serve with white cheese or avocado paste (*guasacaca*).

¼ cup yellow cornmeal
2 TBS unbleached all-purpose flour
¼ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt
¼ cup half-and-half
¼ cup yogurt
1 large egg
¼ cup canned or frozen (defrosted) corn kernels
olive oil (for frying)

Put all ingredients except corn kernels into a blender and puree until smooth.
Add kernels to batter.
Brush 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Stir batter thoroughly before pouring about 2 tablespoons for each *cachapa*.
Fry 3 or 4 *cachapas* at a time, depending on the size of your skillet.
As soon as bubbles form and edges are brown, turn *cachapas* over.
Fry until golden on the other side, for about 1 minute.
Continue with remaining batter, brushing more oil on the skillet if necessary.
Keep cooked *cachapas* warm in a low oven, while preparing the rest.
Serve hot.

Chicken Soup (Hervido de Galina)

This classic hearty soup was traditionally served as the main meal of the day in central Venezuela. The broth as first course, the vegetables and chicken as the main course or, for a more elaborate meal, as accompaniments for the main dish. The vegetables used vary by preference and season. The traditional yams and other tubers are replaced here by turnips and zucchini. The fried herbs and spices added at the end are called *sofrito*. This soup's many variations throughout the country are called *sancocho*, *sopa*, or *asopao*. *Hervido de galina* is served as a soup for a heavy meal, or as a main course for a light meal.

6 cups water
1 chicken (2–3 pounds), skinned and cut into 8 pieces
½ tsp salt
5–6 stalks green onions
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cubed
1 onion, halved
2 corn on the cob, cut crosswise into 4
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 turnip, peeled and cubed
2 carrots, peeled and cubed
2 potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
1 zucchini, cubed

(*continued*)

2 stalks fresh mint
3 stalks parsley
3 stalks cilantro
2 stalks celery, cubed
freshly ground black pepper to taste

In a large saucepan over medium heat, bring to a boil water, chicken, salt, green onions, bell peppers, onion halves, corn cobs, and half the garlic. Skim off froth.
Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Take out the green onions.
Add turnip, carrots, potatoes, and sweet potato, and simmer for 20–25 minutes, or until tender.
Check seasoning, adding more salt if necessary.
Add zucchini, mint, parsley, cilantro, celery, and black pepper when the other vegetables are half done.
When the vegetables and chicken are tender, remove the herb stalks and discard.
Transfer soup to a large serving bowl or tureen.
Pass the *sofrito* for guests to help themselves.

Sofrito

2 TBS corn oil
1 onion, finely chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 red bell peppers, finely chopped
¼ cup cilantro, minced
¼ cup mint, minced
¼ cup parsley, minced
salt

In a skillet heat the oil over medium heat, and gently fry the onion, garlic, and red peppers until tender, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.
Transfer to a blender or food processor and roughly blend with remaining *sofrito* ingredients.
Pour *sofrito* into a bowl to pass at the table.

Black Roast
(Asado Negro)

Each family has its own version of this braised meat dish, which is popular for Sunday luncheon. The traditional way is to simmer it for about 2 hours. An alternative is to use a slow cooker or to bake in a slow oven as given below. Serve with rice and fried plantains or bananas, and other vegetables, including *guasacaca* (avocado relish).

1 piece of chuck roast (2½–3 pounds)
2 whole heads (not cloves) garlic, minced
salt, freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup red wine vinegar
½ cup corn oil
1 cup of dark brown sugar
1 large onion, chopped
1 16-ounce can chopped tomatoes

Marinate the meat in garlic, salt, pepper, and vinegar for 3 hours or overnight; reserve marinade.
Heat oil in a Dutch oven or a deep ovenproof pan. Add sugar and let it melt slowly until it turns very dark.
Carefully put in the meat, turning to let all sides absorb the dark syrup.
Add onion, tomatoes, and marinade.
Put into preheated oven at 325°F, covered, and bake for 1½–2 hours, or until the meat is very tender.
To serve, cut into slices, place on a serving dish surrounded with pan juices.

Avocado Relish (Guasacaca)

This is a popular table condiment and accompaniment to most meat dishes, especially roasts.

2 ripe avocados
juice of 2 lemons
1 large tomato, chopped
1 onion, diced
1 red chili pepper, seeded and sliced (or 3 drops chili sauce, e.g., Tabasco)
1 small green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced (use jalapeno if more heat is desired)
3 TBS cilantro, chopped
½ cup olive oil
2 tsp salt

In a bowl, mash 1 avocado with one-third of the lemon juice. Reserve.
Dice the other avocado and toss with another third of the lemon juice. Reserve.
Process the remaining ingredients in a blender or food processor until smooth.
Fold puree thoroughly into mashed avocado; stir in diced avocado.
Adjust seasoning.
Transfer to a serving bowl. Drizzle remaining lemon juice on top to deter browning.
Cover with plastic wrap and chill until needed.
Just before serving, gently mix the *guasacaca*.

Coconut Milk Layered Cake (Bienmesabe)

This popular dessert is based on a Spanish original of almond cream and honey. Its name translates as "you know me well." The original recipe calls for diluted brandy to moisten the cake; this uses orange juice instead.

2 cups milk
4 egg yolks
1 TBS sugar
1 can coconut milk
2 TBS cornstarch, dissolved in 4 TBS water
1 1-pound sponge or pound cake
1 cup orange juice
1 cup freshly grated coconut, chilled
1 TBS cinnamon

Blend milk, yolks, and sugar in a saucepan; stir over medium heat until slightly thickened.
Reduce heat; stir in coconut milk and cornstarch slurry until mixture is thick and smooth. Set aside to cool.
Slice pound cake lengthwise into 2 layers.
Butter a glass loaf dish (9 × 13 × 2 inches), and pour in a third of the coconut milk mixture.
Lay 1 slice of cake over the cream.
Spoon half the orange juice over cake.
Spread half the grated coconut and another third of coconut milk mixture.
Lay the remaining cake, spoon remaining orange juice over, and spread the remaining grated coconut and the last of the cream.
Sprinkle generously with cinnamon.
Chill, covered, for 6 hours or overnight.

VIETNAM

Vietnam was once a colony of China, then part of a kingdom that extended over Laos and Cambodia, until it became a French colony from 1858 to 1954. Embroiled in civil war until reunification in 1973, the country has been developing rapidly since liberalization in 2001.

The population is predominantly Viet, with minorities of Hmong, Tai (not Thai), Montagnard, and other ethnic groups.

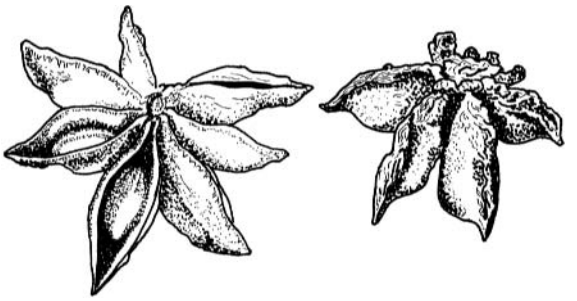
In its tropical lowlands, rice, fruits, vegetables, poultry, and livestock flourish. On the cooler hills and mountains, tea and coffee are grown. Vietnam has now become one of the world's top exporters of coffee. Vietnamese cuisine is influenced by China and France, with many commonalities with Cambodian and Laotian cooking.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice, noodles, herbs, fish sauce.
- Pork, beef, fish, seafood, chicken and other poultry, soybean curd.
- Chayote (christophene), bean (sprouts, pods, and seeds), mushrooms, water convolvulus, eggplants (several varieties), green papaya.
- Mango, papaya, citrus, exotic tropical fruit (rambutan, durian, jackfruit).
- Seasonings: herbs, including several mints, several types of coriander, Thai purple basil, purple perilla, Vietnamese balm (*Houttuynia cordata*), lemon grass; fish sauce (*nuoc mam*), rice vinegar, chili pepper, garlic, star anise, ginger.

Typical Dishes

- Noodle dishes with soup (many regional variations): flat rice noodle (*pho*) with pork or chicken (south), with beef (north); cylindrical rice noodle (*bun*, north).
- Fresh salads of shredded cooked pork or chicken or sausage with crabmeat and herbs rolled in rice-flour wrappers.
- Rice dishes: steamed sticky rice with pork, wrapped in bamboo leaves (*banh chung*); fermented sticky rice (*ruou nep*); claypot rice (*com nieu*) eaten with simple braised fish and countryside vegetables (banana blossom).
- Simmered pork, beef, poultry, or fish (*kho*).
- Soups (*canh*).
- Vegetable dishes (*rau*).



STAR ANISE

- French-influenced dishes: baguette and croissant sandwiches with paté; meat-filled pastries (*pâtes chauds*).

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- All dishes are served at the same time; dishes shared communally. Small bowls, chopsticks, and soup spoons used.
- Breakfast: noodles in soup with meat and fresh greens; meat-filled French pastry; steamed savory rice-flour rolls (*banh cuon*) with meat, shrimp, and mushroom filling; coffee with sweetened condensed milk.
- Lunch: noodles in soup (same as breakfast); wrapped meat and fresh green vegetable roll; fresh fruit or sweet.
- Dinner: rice; simple soup; fresh and cooked vegetable dish; simmered, grilled, or fried meat or fish dish; fresh fruit or sweet. No meal is complete without fresh vegetables and herbs: sliced cucumbers, hot peppers, sprigs of basil, cilantro, mint, and other herbs.
- Snacks: fresh tropical fruits (jackfruit, mango, papaya); corn (grilled, boiled); grilled sticky rice roll with banana filling; grilled dried bananas.
- Many eating venues: from itinerant sellers, street stalls, and late-night markets to specialist elegant restaurants and international fast-food chains.

Vietnamese Crepes (Banh Xeo)

This is a popular snack food bought from street vendors or made at home. A variant called *banh khoai* in central Hue province is flavored with cumin and made without the coconut milk. This is similar to a filled omelet, but there are no eggs in this recipe. (Shrimps are normally included in this dish: if desired, use ½ cup medium-sized fresh shrimp, peeled or unpeeled, sliced lengthwise, added at the same time as the meat.)

2 cups water
2 cups rice flour
1½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp salt
½ cup unsweetened coconut milk
4 green onions, cut into thin rings
1 tsp sugar
⅓ cup hot water
oil for frying

Prepare a batter by mixing water, flour, turmeric, salt.
Stir in coconut milk and green onions; mix thoroughly.
Dissolve sugar in hot water. Let cool and add to batter.
Refrigerate batter in a covered container overnight.
To prepare the crepes: heat 1–2 teaspoons oil at medium heat in a 10-inch heavy frying pan. Swirl oil around pan bottom.
Add the filling. Fry 3–5 slices onion and a few slices pork for 10 seconds until onion is golden.

Pour in ½ cup batter, quickly swirling the pan to distribute batter evenly and thinly.
Add a handful of steamed mung beans, bean sprouts, and some mushroom to one half of the batter.
Reduce heat to low; cover pan.
Cook until the bottom and sides of the crepe are crisp and pulling away from the edges of the pan.
Fold the pancake in half; place on a plate.
Repeat for the remaining batter, adding oil anew for each crepe.
To serve: best eaten as soon as made. Place crepe on a serving plate. Place bowls of table vegetables for diners to help themselves.
To eat, each diner takes a crepe and lays it on her or his individual plate.
The diner tears or cuts off a piece and lays it on a lettuce leaf; adds basil, cucumber, cilantro to taste; and rolls everything together in the lettuce leaf.
The roll is then dipped into garlic fish sauce (see the next recipe) and eaten.

Filling

1 onion, thinly sliced
⅔ pound lean pork or chicken breast, sliced into 2-inch julienne strips
¼ cup dried mung beans (sold at Asian groceries)
2 cups fresh bean sprouts
½ cup sliced fresh mushrooms (straw, oyster, or white mushrooms)

Prepare the dried mung beans for the filling by soaking in cold water overnight.
The next morning, remove hulls from soaked mung beans; steam in a double boiler for 10 minutes, or parboil in the microwave (800 watts) with ¼ cup water for 5 minutes on full power. Drain and set aside.
Have the other ingredients ready to hand on trays for quick access during frying.

Table Vegetables

1 head bibb lettuce, leaves separated and cleaned
10 sprigs fresh Thai basil
1 cup cucumber, sliced into julienne strips
10 sprigs cilantro
sprigs of other herbs (mint, Vietnamese balm), as desired

Arrange table vegetables on bowls or plates to pass at the table.

Garlic Fish Sauce (Nuoc Mam Cham)

This is a ubiquitous table sauce.

2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 red chili pepper, seeded and sliced into thin rings
1 TBS sugar
2 TBS lime juice
5 TBS fish sauce (*nuoc mam*)
1 TBS rice vinegar
3 TBS water
2 TBS finely shredded carrot

Mix all the ingredients; leave to stand for about 20 minutes before using.

Hue Rice (Com Huong Giang)

The practice of setting a table with many small and varied dishes is traced to the former royal court of Hue. Royal customs spread from Hue throughout the country. Hue is still renowned for its repertory of sophisticated dishes.

3 cups cooked rice, allowed to cool for 2–4 hours
1 TBS dried shrimp
1 stalk fresh lemon grass, coarse green leaves discarded
2 shallots, sliced
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp sugar
2 fresh chilies
4 TBS vegetable oil
2 green onions, sliced
1 small onion
2 TBS water
2 TBS *nuoc mam* (fish sauce)
black pepper
1 TBS sesame seeds, toasted
5–6 cilantro sprigs

Separate rice grains by breaking up with a damp fork or hands.
Soak dried shrimp in hot water for 30 minutes. Drain and discard water.
In a blender or food processor, chop shrimp, lemon grass, shallots, garlic, sugar, and chilies.
Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a wok. Stir-fry green onions for 1 minute.
Stir in shrimp and lemon grass mixture; fry for 3 minutes over high heat. Remove and reserve.
Place remaining 2 tablespoons oil into the wok. Heat until hazy.
Add onion and stir-fry until translucent.
Stir in rice and fry for 5 minutes, making sure all rice is coated with oil.
Stir in water, fish sauce, and black pepper to taste.
Add shrimp and lemon grass mixture and the toasted sesame seeds.
Mix well and cook, stirring briskly, until thoroughly heated through.
Transfer to a heated platter and garnish with cilantro sprigs.
Serve with garlic fish sauce.

Caramel-Simmered Pork Ribs (Suon Kho)

This is a dish commonly served at a family evening meal with a soup, some boiled or stir-fried vegetables, and plenty of hot rice. The same procedure can be used for beef, chicken or duck, or large meaty fish.

1 onion, minced (or pureed in blender)
1 TBS sugar
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup fish sauce
2–3 pounds meaty pork short ribs
¼ cup caramel sauce (see the next recipe)
1 green onion, green top only, chopped

Prepare a marinade in a covered container using onion, sugar, pepper, and 2 tablespoons fish sauce.
Turn ribs several times in the marinade and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.
Quickly sear ribs under a very hot broiler until they sizzle and take a golden color (about 4–5 minutes on each side; they must not cook completely at this point.)
In a heavy covered saucepan, place ribs, caramel sauce, the remaining fish sauce, and enough water (about 2 cups) to almost cover the ribs.
Cover; bring to a boil; reduce heat to a simmer for 20 minutes.
Uncover and continue to simmer until the ribs are tender and the sauce quite reduced and deep brown in color, for about 30–40 minutes.
Turn off the heat; leave ribs to cool in the pan.
Remove ribs and set aside. Place sauce to chill in the refrigerator for about 1–2 hours; skim off congealed fat.
Return ribs to sauce and gently reheat.
Garnish with chopped green onion.

Caramel Sauce (Nuoc Mau)

This is a bitter-sweet dark-brown liquid used to color and flavor simmered and barbecued dishes. It is possible to buy a similar product called burnt sugar sauce in Caribbean stores. However, it is not very difficult to make it yourself. The method recommended here is not traditional, but produces the same result.

1 cup sugar
1½ cups hot water

First prepare the cooling bath for the hot caramel: fill the sink or a large roasting pan with 2 inches of cool water.
In a small heavy saucepan over low heat, dissolve sugar in 1 cup hot water.
Continue cooking the syrup as its color turns from pale gold to dark caramel, for about 10 minutes.

(*continued*)

Swirl the pan so that the syrup colors evenly.
When smoke starts rising from the syrup, turn off heat.
Slowly and carefully swirl the caramel in the pan; it will continue to cook in the remaining heat.
When the color reaches that of black coffee, stop the cooking process by placing the bottom of the pan in the sink or tray.
The hot pan bottom will sizzle somewhat; do not be alarmed but be careful and firmly hold onto the pan handle.
When the sizzling has stopped, take the pan off the sink or tray.
Gradually add remaining hot water to the pan (there may still be a slight reaction here).
Put saucepan over low heat to dissolve caramel, for about 10 minutes.
Once dissolved, turn off heat.
The resulting bitter-sweet dark syrup will keep indefinitely without refrigeration.

Rainbow Drink (Che Ba Mau)

Serve this as a snack or dessert on a hot day.

2 cups water
¾ cup mung beans, soaked for 3 hours, hulls removed, drained
½ cup sugar
1½ cups coconut milk
¼ cup large-size tapioca pearls (available in Oriental stores)
½ cup sweetened red azuki beans (available in cans from Oriental stores), chilled
1 can longans or lychees in light syrup, drained and chilled
4 cups (or more) shaved ice (blend or process in food processor ice cubes to a slush)

Boil 2 cups water in a pot over medium heat.
Add mung beans and ¼ cup sugar.
Simmer, stirring constantly, until all the water is absorbed and beans are tender but still retain their shape, for about 15–20 minutes. Turn off heat; once cool, refrigerate.
Simmer the coconut milk and the remaining sugar in a covered saucepan.
Add tapioca pearls. Cover, turn off heat, and let tapioca rest undisturbed for 30 minutes.
Turn heat back on low; simmer tapioca pearls until transparent, for about 20–30 minutes (do not worry about a few remaining white cores).
Turn off heat. Leave covered until cool. Refrigerate.
Assemble the dessert: in a tall parfait glass, make alternating layers of beans or tapioca and ice, beginning with 3 tablespoons of azuki beans at the bottom.
Place 2 tablespoons shaved ice.
Next add 3 tablespoons of tapioca pearls.
Place another layer of shaved ice.

Add 3 tablespoons sweetened mung beans.
Place another layer of ice.
Continue to the top, ending with longans or lychees.
Eat with a long spoon and straw.

Coconut Caramel Flan (Banh Dua Ca Ra Men)

This is a Vietnamese adaptation of a European dessert, enhanced with a local garnish: a small scoop of shaved ice atop each custard before serving.

½ cup sugar
¼ cup water
1 cup coconut milk
1 cup milk
4 eggs, beaten
1 tsp vanilla extract
4 ramekins or custard cups, warmed (pour in boiling water, let stand for 10 minutes, pour off water and wipe dry)
2 cups shaved ice, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 325°F.
Make a caramel by dissolving ¼ cup sugar in ¼ cup water in a small, heavy saucepan over low heat until dark golden brown and thick.
Quickly pour the caramel syrup into 4 warmed ramekins.
Swirl ramekins to let caramel sauce cover the bottom and a bit up the sides. Set aside.
Stir coconut milk, milk, and the remaining sugar in a saucepan over low heat until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat.
Combine eggs and vanilla in a small bowl. Gradually mix in ¼ cup of the warm coconut mixture and stir well.
Add the egg mixture into coconut mixture, blending thoroughly.
Divide custard mixture among the ramekins.
Place ramekins in a roasting pan and pour in hot water half way up the ramekins.
Bake for 30 minutes and turn off heat. Allow the custards to rest in the oven for 10 minutes, then remove using oven gloves.
Leave to cool, then refrigerate.
Run a knife around the edge of the ramekins and invert onto dessert plates. Garnish with a small mound of shaved ice.

YEMEN

Located at the southeastern tip of the Arabian peninsula, Yemen comprises North Yemen, historically part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, and South Yemen, formerly a British protectorate, unified in 1990.

Largely mountainous in the interior, and desert along the coastal areas, the climate is hot and humid along the coast. Very little of the land is arable, but cereals, fruits, and vegetables grow well where water and topsoil are available. Yemen's most famous crop is coffee (the mocha variety), reputed as the best in the world.

Yemenis are predominantly Arab Muslims, with a small minority of Jews, East Indians, and other nationalities. The cuisine shows Turkish and Arab influence in the use of many spices.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: flat bread, rice.
- Fish, seafood, lamb/mutton, goat, beef, chicken, eggs, dairy.
- Potato, chickpea and other legumes, squash, zucchini, cabbage, carrot, bell pepper, tomato, cucumber, olive, corn, pickled vegetables.
- Melon, watermelon, grape, banana, papaya, citrus, dates.
- Seasonings: cumin, hot chilies, fenugreek, onion, cilantro, other spices. Table condiments/sauces: *schug* (pronounced "suh-hoog": spicy cilantro sauce), *hilbeh* (fenugreek sauce).

Typical Dishes

- Stews of meat or fish and vegetables, flavored with cumin, fenugreek, and other spices.
- Soups: lentil (*shorba adas*), vegetable (*shorba khodar*).
- Flat breads (many varieties): freshly made of wheat, corn, barley, millet, sorghum, or mixed grains with legumes.
- Grilled or roast lamb, beef, chicken, or fish. Grilled liver with spices: *kebda*.
- Vegetable dishes: beans fried (*fasuliya*) or stewed (*fuul*); mixed fried vegetables (*mshakkle*). Salads in season.
- Turkish-style rich sweets with honey, nuts, and butter.

- Drinks: Coffee (locally grown mocha is choice and very expensive) is often ginger coffee (*qishr*), prepared from coffee bean shells, cinnamon, and ginger. Sweet tea (*shai*) is drunk from small glasses at every occasion. Fresh squeezed juices from local fruits, such as mango, papaya, orange, lemon, strawberry, banana. Bottled soft drinks, canned juices. Alcohol is not forbidden.

Styles of Eating

- Meals are eaten by families sharing from a pot. Male and female guests eat separately (and, in traditional households, males always eat before women). Traditional meals are eaten with the right hand.
- Breakfast: light meal of stewed or fried beans with flat bread; or fried eggs with onion and tomatoes and flat bread. Sweet tea to drink.
- Lunch: the main meal between 11 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. Appetizer of *fatta* (bread soaked in honey, soup, or milk) or soup of lentils; main course of *salta* (lamb stew with vegetables) accompanied by flat bread or rice, salad of tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers; cooked vegetable dish; roast chicken or lamb; dessert of fresh fruit or sweet; sweet tea.
- Supper: like breakfast, a light meal of beans with flat bread; salad; tea.
- Snacks (street foods, or eaten at teahouses): flat bread in yoghurt and herbs (*shafut*), bean fritters (*falafel*), skewered grilled meat (*kebab*), layered meats (*shwarma*), boiled potatoes, boiled eggs. Peddlers in wheelbarrows sell fried fish, fruits, juice, sweets.
- In restaurants, single or accompanied females may only sit in areas designated "family rooms." Not all restaurants have family rooms. Some restaurants in urban centers may lay places with individual dishes and forks and spoons.
- Guests are almost universally offered a rich honey cake (*bint al sahn*).

Crisp Savory Pancakes (Mellawach)

One of the many types of excellent local flat breads, this is often served for breakfast, or as a first course for meals.

4 cups flour
1¼ cups cold, refrigerated water
½ tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
½ cup butter, softened
1 TBS oil for frying

Mix flour, water, baking powder, and salt into a dough.
Knead for 10–15 minutes; let rest for ½ hr, covered with a moist cloth.
On a floured surface, roll dough into a long cylinder; divide into 8 parts.
With a floured rolling pin, roll each piece very thinly.
Butter each piece of dough; fold in half.
Butter top again and fold; roll into a small, tight cylinder.
Cover and leave overnight in refrigerator.

(*continued*)

The following morning, remove and flatten each cylinder into a round cake about $\frac{1}{8}$-inch thick or less.
Heat oil in a frying pan at medium heat, and fry each cake until flaky.
Serve warm with tomato-cilantro dip.

Tomato-Cilantro Dip (Bandura b'Kuzbara)

2 tomatoes, chopped
1 onion, chopped
$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cayenne powder or paprika
1 cup finely minced cilantro
3 TBS olive oil
juice of 1 lemon
salt to taste

In a food processor, roughly puree all ingredients.
Serve with *mellawach*.
Note: Yemenite food is generally very hot, so feel free to add more cayenne.

Sana'a Meat Stew (Saltah)

The traditional very fiery and spicy dish of Sana'a, the capital, used ground meat and was an important meal particularly for individuals who chew *qat*, a herb that increases thirst. The stew is usually made in a special large ceramic bowl kept at very high heat on coals. It is eaten with flat bread or rice. The dish is now made all over the country with all types of meat and many variations. This is a tamed version without the 3 or more chilies usually required.

2 TBS oil
2 onions, chopped
1 pound ground meat (beef or chicken), cubed stewing beef, or chicken legs
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
1 zucchini, cut into 2-inch lengths
1 carrot, peeled and cubed
2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 8-ounce can chickpeas (or fresh broad beans; or dried lentils soaked for 30 minutes in warm water and drained)
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup tomato paste
2 cups beef or chicken stock (or 2 bouillon cubes dissolved in 2 cups water)
2 eggs, beaten
1 TBS salt
1 tsp paprika (or 1 green fresh chili, cored, seeded, and minced)
1 TBS cumin
2 garlic cloves, minced

Heat oil in a large, heavy saucepan; fry onions until translucent.
Stir in the meat, fry for 5–8 minutes.
Add tomatoes, fry for 2 minutes.
Add rest of vegetables, tomato paste, stock, eggs, salt, paprika, cumin, and garlic.
Bring to a boil, reduce heat, then simmer for 30–45 minutes.

Turn off heat.
Stir in green sauce with *hilbe* just before serving (sauce becomes bitter if mixed in while stew is cooking).

Green Sauce with Hilbe

2 TBS fenugreek seeds
5 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp turmeric powder
¼ tsp cardamoms
¼ tsp caraway seeds
juice of 1 lemon
½ cup cilantro, chopped

Pour a cup of boiling water over fenugreek seeds; steep, covered, for 3 hours.
Drain off water.
In a food processor or blender, puree fenugreek with garlic, tomato, onion, salt, spices, lemon juice, and cilantro.
Pour over stew just before serving.

Hawayij (*Yemeni Spice Mix*)

This spice blend is used in many Yemeni dishes, and is also taken on its own in tea form as a general tonic.

3 tsp fenugreek seeds
3 tsp black peppercorns
1 tsp saffron threads
½ tsp cardamom seeds
1 tsp turmeric powder

Soak the fenugreek seeds in 1 cup boiling water for ½ hour; discard the water.
Rinse and repeat twice.
Allow to dry thoroughly; spread in one layer on paper towel.
Using food processor (traditionally, a mortar), grind all ingredients except turmeric.
Stir in turmeric; store in an airtight jar until needed.

Chicken Soup (Shurba Dejaj)

This soup, which is more like a stew, is often served with rice for lunch.

1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper
6 chicken legs, including thighs
1 TBS oil
2 onions, quartered
2 carrots, peeled and cubed
2 tomatoes, diced
1 zucchini, cubed
6 cups water
¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped

(*continued*)

Blend cumin, turmeric, salt, and pepper; rub well over chicken.
In a heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat.
When hot, sear chicken on all sides to brown the skin. Set aside.
Pour off as much oil as you can but do not wash pan.
Into pan, add chicken, onions, carrots, tomatoes, zucchini, and water.
Bring to a boil.
Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour or until chicken is tender.
Skim foam from time to time.
Adjust seasoning and stir in cilantro just before serving.
Serve hot.

Honey Cake (Bint al Sahn)

Bint al sahn ("daughter of the pan") is the dessert for special occasions, which Yemeni housewives proudly present to guests. Almost no visit is without an offering of *bint al sahn*. It is eaten by breaking off pieces with the fingers and dipping them into the butter and honey.

1 packet active dry yeast
¼ cup warm water
3 cups flour, sifted
½ tsp salt
5 eggs, beaten
⅔ cup ghee (clarified or melted butter, plus extra for greasing baking sheet)
⅓ cup ghee or melted butter for serving
½ cup warm honey, for serving

Dissolve yeast in warm water until frothy (10 minutes).
Meanwhile grease baking sheet with ghee.
In a food processor, combine flour, salt, yeast, and eggs to make a dough.
Slowly pour in ghee, continuing to process until all ghee is incorporated.
Remove dough; knead on oiled surface until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes.
Divide dough into 16 pieces.
Roll out each piece of dough to a paper-thin 12-inch pastry circle.
Place 1 rolled out pastry on the baking sheet; brush well with ghee.
Roll out 7 more pastry circles and stack over the first, coating each layer, including the topmost, liberally with ghee.
Press edges together well.
Make a second stack with the remaining dough on the same or a separate baking sheet.
Let both stacks rest in a warm draft free place for 45 minutes.
Bake at 350°F for 25–30 minutes until light golden brown; the bottom of each stack should sound hollow when tapped.
Place each stack on a large, warmed serving plate.

Pour melted butter, followed by honey, over each stack.
Serve at once.

Ginger Coffee (Qishr)

Ideally, this drink would be made in a tall, long-handled, narrow brass coffeepot. Other spices mixed usually into coffee are cinnamon, cardamom, and nutmeg. However, for the prime mocha beans that are used for a cup of coffee usually drunk at home for breakfast, no spices are mixed. *Qishr* is served in tiny demitasse cups.

1 cup freshly roasted coffee beans
1 cup cold water
6 tsp sugar
2 tsp dried ginger powder

Pound coffee beans in a brass mortar (or grind, using a coffee mill).
Boil water in a small saucepan (or brass coffeepot if available).
Add coffee, sugar, and ginger.
Slowly bring mixture to a boil.
Take off heat until froth subsides.
Return pan to the fire.
Repeat boiling and taking off heat three times.
Divide coffee among 4 demitasse cups.
Serve without delay.

ZAMBIA

A landlocked country in southern Africa, Zambia was a British protectorate from the late nineteenth century until independence in 1964. The country is mountainous with high plateaus and a cool tropical climate, which enables cultivation of many crops, primarily corn (maize), the staple.

The population comprises more than seventy ethnic groups, predominantly the Bemba and Nyanja-Chewa, with minorities of Europeans and East Indians. Zambian indigenous food is based on a cornmeal porridge called *nsima* eaten with a side dish, called generically, *ndiwo*, of vegetables, meat, fish, or chicken. European and East Indian minorities adapt local ingredients to their own cuisine and styles of eating.

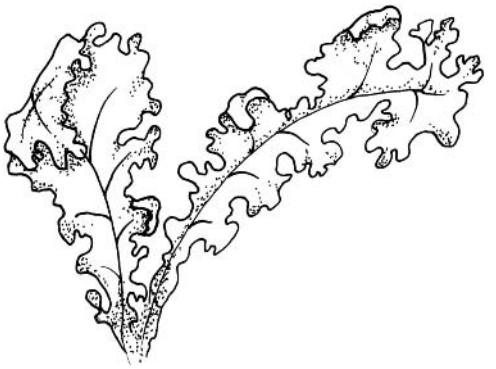
Foodstuffs

- Staples: cornmeal, also called *mealie* meal.
- Sorghum, cassava, millet, rice (depending on region and availability, these may be substituted for or mixed with cornmeal to make the staple paste).
- Beef, goat, sheep, fish, pork, poultry, eggs, wild game (birds, field mice, deer), processed soybeans locally called "soy pieces."
- Pumpkin, beans (including soy) and other legumes, okra, onion, tomato, greens (pumpkin, cassava leaves), cucumber, wild greens, wild mushrooms.
- Seasonings: onion, tomato, ginger, pepper, peanut powder.

Typical Dishes

- Staple porridge of cornmeal, of medium consistency (not too stiff, nor too soft) (called *sima* or *nsima* in eastern Zambia, *ubwali* in northern Zambia, *insima* in southern Zambia, *buhobe* in western Zambia).
- Corn dishes: roasted, boiled, fried, ground to rice-grain size, and cooked as rice.
- *Ndiwo* (generic term for side dish): stews of vegetables, meat, fish, soy pieces or chicken, with or without flavoring of peanuts.
- Stews of beans and other legumes or peanuts with hominy corn (samp).
- Peanut sausage: a vegetarian "sausage" named after the wild orchid tubers called *chinaka* or *chikanda* (depending on the ethnic group) used to gel them.

Styles of Eating



KALE

- One to three meals and snacks a day (meals without staple are not considered meals but snacks). If there is a shortage of food, and only one meal a day is affordable, then it is eaten between late afternoon and evening.
- All diners wash hands together with soap and water before and after eating: older persons or guest first, younger persons assisting by pouring water from a pitcher, the water caught underneath with a basin. The family eats together surrounding the communal plate of cornmeal. The side dish is placed in a communal bowl.
- The *nsima* is eaten with the fingers of the right hand only, molded into a ball with an indentation made by the right thumb. The ball is dipped into the accompanying sauce or stew, then conveyed to the mouth.
- Breakfast: gruel (thin porridge) with peanut powder (*bala lotendela*) or sugar.
- Lunch: *nsima* with side dish of greens or other vegetables.
- Dinner: *nsima* with side dish of fish, chicken or meat, fresh fruit.
- Snacks: *chinaka* sausage with bread, fried plantains.
- Drinks: tea (locally grown), coffee, locally brewed beer from corn or sorghum (*chibuku*), international brands of bottled soft drinks and beer.

Green Mealie *Loaf*

Corn or maize, also called *mealie* in Zambian English, was introduced by Europeans in the eighteenth century and became the major staple of Zambia. Serve this bread with butter or peanut butter and jam for a European-Zambian style breakfast or teatime.

2 cups frozen sweet corn kernels, defrosted and drained
2 cups flour
2 TBS sugar
¼ cup melted butter
¼ tsp salt
3 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
2 eggs
½ cup milk

In a food processor, process sweet corn until roughly chopped.
Transfer to a bowl.
Put remaining ingredients in the food processor and process until smooth.
Add sweet corn to briefly mix.
Transfer mixture to a greased casserole.
Place casserole inside a roasting tray with hot water to reach halfway up the casserole.
Bake in preheated oven at 350°F for about 30–40 minutes, or until loaf tests done.

(*continued*)

Let cool for 10 minutes.
Slice and serve warm.

Okra Soup

Serve this as a first course before meat pie (see the next recipe). If fresh okra is not available, substitute zucchini. Zucchini will not give the silky consistency to the soup, however.

2 TBS vegetable oil
1 onion, finely chopped
½ pound fresh okra, trimmed and sliced into rings
¼ tsp cinnamon
salt, pepper to taste
4 cups chicken stock
1 cup cooked potato, diced
2 stalks green onions, chopped

Heat oil in a saucepan; stir in onion and fry until soft.
Add okra, cinnamon, salt, and pepper, frying for 2–3 minutes more. Set aside about 12 slices okra for garnish.
Add stock, cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer for 7–10 minutes.
Let cool slightly; transfer to a blender.
Blend to a rough or smooth puree (as desired).
Return to pan; reheat and taste, adding more water or stock if too thick to pour.
Add potato and cook until heated through.
Serve garnished with reserved okra slices and green onions.

Meat and Corn Pie (Mealie Tart)

This European-influenced pie is served with a salad for a lunch, or as a main course after soup.

3 cups milk
¼ cup butter (plus extra for greasing)
¼ tsp salt
1 pound cornmeal or farina
1½ pounds ground meat (beef or chicken)
1 bouillon cube, crumbled
1 cup diced carrots or frozen peas, defrosted
¼ tsp chili pepper
¼ tsp coriander powder

Warm milk with butter and salt.
Place cornmeal in a large bowl, and stir in milk mixture gradually with a wooden spoon, ensuring there are no lumps.

Mix well to make a dough.
Line a buttered casserole with ⅔ of the dough.
Mix thoroughly the meat, bouillon cube, vegetables, and spices; spoon into the pastry shell.
On a floured surface, roll out the remaining dough to slightly larger than the casserole dish; place over filling and crimp or pinch the edges of dough together.
Cut decorative slits in the top crust to allow steam to escape.
Bake in a preheated 325°F oven for 40 minutes to 1 hour.
Serve hot.

Fish Stew

This dish is commonly prepared with fresh or dried *kapenta*, a small fish found in the Zambezi and other rivers in Zambia. Most of the catch is sun-dried for preservation. Serve with *nsima* (see Angola for the box "African Staple") for dinner.

3 TBS oil
1 onion, chopped
2 pounds fresh white fish fillet, cut into 8 pieces (or 1½ pounds dried anchovies, stockfish, or other salted dried fish, available from Asian and Caribbean stores)
salt, pepper to taste
2 tomatoes, diced

For fresh fish: heat oil at medium heat; stir in onion and fry until golden brown.
Add fish, season with salt and pepper.
Cover and reduce heat to lowest.
Let simmer for 10 minutes (add ¼ cup water if it looks dry).
Add tomatoes, cover and simmer for a further 10 minutes.
Serve hot with *nsima*.
For dried fish: soak fish in cold water in a covered container in the refrigerator overnight. Change water at least twice.
Sauté onion in oil until soft.
Add tomatoes and 1 cup water; cook for 5–8 minutes until tomatoes are soft.
Add dried fish; cover and simmer for 20–30 minutes or until fish is tender.
Adjust seasoning: because the fish has been salted, the dish may not need any more salt. If it is still too salty, squeeze some fresh lemon juice over the fish before serving.

Greens in Peanut Sauce (Ifisashi)

This dish is made throughout Zambia as a side dish to accompany hot cornmeal porridge (*nsima*). Any available meat, such as beef, chicken, game, dried or canned meat, can be added in variable amounts for additional flavor. Baking soda

is traditionally used to tenderize collard greens or kale. Collard greens are also called rape leaves in Zambia.

1 onion, sliced
2 medium tomatoes, sliced
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
1 cup raw peanuts, ground roughly (or ¾ cup natural chunky peanut butter)
salt
2 pounds fresh collard greens (or kale, cabbage, or spinach), washed and chopped
a pinch of baking soda (if using collards or kale)

Boil onion, tomatoes, ginger, and peanuts with water, adding salt to taste.
After 2–3 minutes, add greens, and baking soda if using kale or collards.
Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until peanuts are soft and the mixture has become a fairly thick buttery sauce (15–20 minutes).
Serve hot or cold with *nsima*.

Fried Plantains

These are commonly eaten as a snack.

4 plantains (or substitute semi-ripe bananas), sliced into 1-inch-thick disks
juice of 1 lemon
peanut or other oil for frying
¼ tsp salt
a pinch of chili pepper flakes
3 TBS sugar

Toss plantains or bananas, as soon as cut, with lemon juice.
Shallow-fry in hot oil until crisp.
Drain on paper towels.
Sprinkle with chili flakes and salt.
Alternatively, sprinkle with sugar.
Serve hot.

ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar is a group of islands in the Indian Ocean, part of Tanzania, that are famed for spices, particularly vanilla and cloves. Hence Zanzibar is also named the Spice Islands (the Molucca islands in Southeast Asia are also called Spice Islands). The main island, called Unguja locally but Zanzibar elsewhere, has tropical coastal plains with a cooler central plateau, ideal for cloves, its major crop, and other spices.

Originally settled by Persians, Zanzibar came under Portuguese rule in the sixteenth century, then under the sultanate of Oman, who established trade in Zanzibar and the East African coast in slaves, gold, ivory, and, later, spices. German, Italian, and British colonization lasted from the 1880s until independence in 1963. Zanzibar merged with Tanzania in 1964.

The population, mostly Muslim, is mixed Arab, African, and Indian. The rich cuisine of Zanzibar reflects this with Persian, East African, and East Indian elements, with influences as well from the neighboring islands of Comoros and Reunion.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: rice (mostly imported), flat breads, cassava, corn.
- Fish, seafood, goat, beef, poultry, eggs, dairy products (yogurt, cheese).
- Plantain, potato (white and sweet), yam, peas and other legumes, cabbage, green vegetables (including cassava leaves), breadfruit.
- Coconut, banana, pineapple, jackfruit, mango, papaya, rambutan, and other tropical fruits.
- Seasonings: locally grown curry spices (cinnamon, cumin, coriander, cardamom, nutmeg, etc.), garlic, saffron, vanilla, coconut milk.

Typical Dishes

- *Ugali*: the staple porridge or stiff paste of cassava or cornmeal.
- Rice dishes: Persian-influenced rice (*pilau*), Indian-influenced rice (*biriani*).
- Breads: Indian-influenced *chapati*, Arab-influenced sesame bread.

VANILLA POD

- Grilled, skewered, and marinated meats and seafood (octopus, squid).
- Curry-flavored stews of meat, seafood, and fish with or without vegetables.
- Sweets: Arab- or Indian-influenced candies of carrot (*haluwa*), coconut, cashew nut, peanut.

Styles of Eating

- Three meals and snacks daily.
- All foods are brought to the table at the same time.
- *Ugali* (porridge or paste) is eaten communally with a vegetable sauce, with or without meat. The right hand is used to shape the paste into balls to be dipped into sauce and eaten.
- Traditional Arab-style of eating is on low table with rice, meat, and vegetables on shared tray, eaten with fingers of right hand only.
- Breakfast: cassava porridge or boiled cassava, flat breads, fresh fruit, tea.
- Lunch: *chapati* or other Indian flat bread or cassava porridge, vegetable or lentil curry sauce, fresh fruit.
- Dinner: flavored rice (*pilau*, *biriani*), vegetable salad; plain rice, vegetable with meat or fish curry; fresh fruit or sweet.
- Snacks sold in streets and on the beach: meat- or vegetable-filled pastries (*samosa*), grilled cassava tuber, Zanzibar pizza (eggs, cheese, onions, sausage wrapped in crepes).
- Drinks: ginger beer is the preferred drink; fresh tropical fruit juice (mango, pineapple, tamarind, coconut), international brands of bottled drinks.
- Many restaurants, bars, and cafes serve Indian, Western, and Chinese food.

Fish Croquettes (Samaki Wa Kusonga)

Fish and seafood are popular, usually marinated in spices and tamarind or lime juice and grilled over charcoal. Serve this dish as a first course for dinner, or as a main course for lunch or a light meal with rice or flat bread (*chapati*) and a vegetable dish.

1 pound cooked fish (any firm-fleshed white fish, grilled or steamed; or canned tuna or salmon, drained), flaked
2 eggs, beaten
¼ tsp salt
10 threads saffron, soaked in 2 TBS warm water for 15 minutes (or ¼ tsp turmeric)
¼ tsp powdered cloves
¼ tsp cumin powder
1 TBS vinegar
½ cup stale bread crumbs
¾ cup ghee (clarified butter) or oil for frying
4 slices lemon (for garnish)
8 whole cloves (for garnish)

Mix thoroughly fish flakes with eggs, salt, saffron with soaking water, the rest of the spices, and vinegar.
Chill, covered, for 30 minutes.
Form into golf-ball-sized croquettes.
Place on a plate or tray spread with bread crumbs.

Roll balls in crumbs, pressing them in on all sides.
Chill for 1 hour.
Fry in ghee until golden brown on all sides.
Garnish with lemon slices studded with whole cloves.

Zanzibar Pilau

The Persian influence in this rice dish is evident in its name. It is almost a complete meal in itself. Serve in the middle of a tablecoth laid on the floor, surrounded by bowls of fresh fruit and vegetable side dishes, or with a salad of diced cucumbers and tomatoes with yogurt. Diners eat with fingers from the "pie-slice" area directly in front of them.

1½–2 pounds meat (beef, chicken, mutton, fish, shrimp, or prawns or any mix of those), cut into bite-sized pieces, shrimps and prawns left whole
1 bay leaf
½ tsp salt
5 cups water
1 tsp cumin seeds
10 whole black peppercorns
10 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
5 cardamom pods
4 TBS oil
3 onions, finely chopped
2 potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 cups rice (uncooked), washed and drained
1 cup seedless raisins
½ cup cashew nuts

Gently simmer the meat with bay leaf, salt, and water for 15 minutes. (If using fish or seafood, for only 10 minutes.) Drain meat, reserving broth. Discard bay leaf.
Place cumin, peppercorns, cloves, cinnamon, and cardamom in a small piece of cheesecloth tied securely.
Place spice bag in a small bowl; cover with ½ cup boiling water. Set aside.
Heat oil over medium heat in a large, heavy saucepan.
Fry onions until golden brown; remove and reserve.
Brown potatoes briefly in remaining oil. (Add a bit more oil if needed.) Reserve.
Stir in garlic and ginger; fry for 2–3 minutes until fragrant.
Raise heat. Add meat and briefly brown. Remove meat mixture and reserve.
Stir in rice, frying for 2–3 minutes.
Add broth, spice bag and spice-soaking water, adding more water if needed to make up 5½ cups.
Bring to a boil.
Stir in potatoes and meat mixture. Cover, and reduce heat to lowest possible. Simmer for 20–30 minutes, or until all broth is absorbed and rice is tender.
Stir in onions and ⅔ of the raisins. Turn off heat; leave rice undisturbed for 10–15 minutes.

(*continued*)

Mound rice quickly on a warmed platter.
Arrange the potatoes and meat evenly over the rice; smooth the surface of the rice.
Sprinkle with cashew nuts and remaining raisins.
Serve immediately.

Ground Beef Curry (Mchuzi wa Kima)

This Indian-influenced dish often appears during Ramadan (to break the fast). *Kima* is the name of a ground meat curry (*keema*) commonly served in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Serve this for dinner with plain rice or flat bread (*chapati*, available from Indian food stores) and small bowls of chopped fruits, vegetables, and pickles.

4 TBS ghee (clarified butter)
1 onion, finely chopped
4 potatoes, peeled and diced
1 bay leaf
1½ pounds ground beef
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp powdered cloves
½ tsp curry powder
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 8-ounce can tomato paste
1 cup beef broth (or 1 cube beef bouillon dissolved in 1 cup hot water)
2 TBS fresh ginger, grated
3 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp cardamom powder
juice of ½ lemon

Heat ghee in a heavy saucepan over low heat.
Stir in onion, fry until soft. Add potatoes and bay leaf; fry for 5 minutes.
Increase heat and add meat. Brown well.
Stir in nutmeg, cloves, curry powder, paprika, salt, and pepper; let cook for 1–2 minutes.
Add tomato paste and half of the stock.
Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
Add remaining stock if sauce becomes too thick. The consistency of the sauce should be very dense, not soupy.
Add ginger, garlic, cinnamon, and cardamom; simmer for another 10 minutes.
Adjust seasoning.
Just before serving, discard bay leaf and stir in lemon juice.
Serve at once with chapati or rice, and at least three or all of the following side dishes in separate bowls.

Side Dishes of Fruits and Vegetables

1 cup diced bananas tossed in 1 TBS lemon juice
1 cup crisp-fried onion slices (available in packets at Asian stores, or can be prepared at home)
½ cup mango chutney (available from Asian stores)
½ cup grated fresh coconut, or desiccated coconut refreshed with ¼ cup warm milk
1 cup orange sections, diced

½ cup cucumber slices
1 red or green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced
1 red apple, cored, unpeeled, and diced, tossed in 1 TBS lemon juice

Fruit and Coconut Drink (Maji ya Matunda na Nazi)

This drink is best made with fresh, ripe pineapple. Nowadays, chilled fresh pineapple chunks are sold in some supermarkets. Serve as a snack or after a meal.

1 pound canned pineapple pieces in natural (unsweetened) juice (or 1 16-ounce package fresh sliced pineapple in natural juice, chilled)
1 banana
4 scoops vanilla or coconut ice cream
⅔ cup coconut milk
ice cubes

Reserve 4 pieces of pineapple for garnish.
In a blender or processor, puree pineapple pieces and juice, banana, ice cream, and coconut milk.
Divide juice among 4 tall glasses with ice cubes.
Garnish with pineapple pieces.

Cashew Nut and Sweet Potato Cakes

Serve these as dessert or as a snack with ginger drink.

4 eggs, separated
¼ tsp cream of tartar
½ cup butter, at room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 cup cashew nuts, finely ground
1 cup cooked, mashed sweet potato

Beat egg whites with cream of tartar until stiff. Refrigerate until needed.
Cream butter and sugar until light.
Whisk in egg yolks, one at a time.
Whisk in cashew nuts and sweet potatoes.
Lightly fold in beaten egg whites.
Place cupcake liners in cupcake pans; spoon mixture to fill liners two-thirds full.
Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 20 minutes or until cakes are golden and test done.

Hot Ginger Drink (Tangawizi)

Ginger is drunk in the form of cold ginger beer or this warming drink, good for a cool evening on the beach.

5 cups water
3 tsp grated fresh ginger root
sugar to taste

Bring water to a boil.
Add ginger and sugar to taste; simmer for 5 minutes.
Serve hot.

Banana Custard (N'dizi na Kasted)

In Zanzibar, custard is usually made from a packaged mix. Alternatively, make some from scratch or use readymade custard.

2 ripe bananas, peeled and sliced fine
1½ cups prepared custard sauce
½ tsp cinnamon powder
¼ tsp ground cloves
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ cup sugar
2 TBS peanuts, finely chopped

Distribute bananas among 4 dessert bowls.
Spoon custard sauce over bananas.
Chill for about 30 minutes.
Combine spices, sugar, and peanuts.
Sprinkle over custard and serve.

ZIMBABWE

A landlocked country in southern Africa, Zimbabwe was a British colony from 1895 until independence in 1965. The terrain is mostly high tropical plateau, ideal for many different crops—maize, wheat, coffee, sugarcane, peanuts, vegetables, fruits—and livestock, making Zimbabwe a bread basket. However, from 1995, government policies have caused agricultural crises and food shortages.

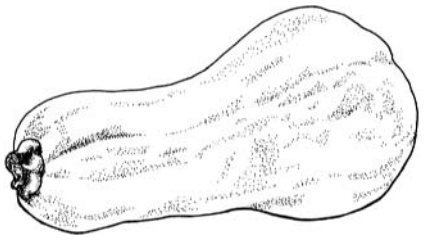
Zimbabweans comprise several African ethnic groups, predominantly Shona and Ndebele, with minorities of mixed European-Africans or Asian-Africans, Asians (East Indians) and Europeans. Zimbabwean cooking combines local ingredients (peanuts, pumpkins, squash) with East Asian spices (curry powder) and European techniques, with influence from neighboring countries.

Foodstuffs

- Staples: millet, maize.
- Beef, chicken, goat, eggs.
- Beans and peas, pumpkin, cassava, potatoes (white and sweet), cabbage, other green vegetables (including leaves of baobab, pumpkin, wild plants).
- Banana, papaya, mango, coconut, oranges, berries.

Typical Dishes

- *Sadza* (also *nsima*: name and ingredient differ regionally): thick paste of millet or cornmeal, the consistency of firm mashed potatoes.
- Stews of meat and vegetables (generic term, *nyama*, from the Shona term for meat): beef (*nyama ye mombe*), chicken (*nyama ye huku*), goat (*nyama ye mbudzi*). Peanut-flavored stews: *dovi*.
- Cape Malay (South Africa)-influenced dishes for game and other meats: barbecued marinated meats (*sosatie*).
- Soups of vegetables with or without meat.
- European-influenced sweets using local ingredients: custard with fruit, fruit crumble or pie, sweet-potato cookies.



BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Styles of Eating

- One to three meals and snacks a day, depending on ethnicity, availability, and affordability. If only one meal is eaten, this is eaten in the early evening, usually just cornmeal (*sadza*).
- Families eat together on a mat on the floor, surrounding the communal dish placed in the center. Some families have individual plates and spoons; European families eat European style. Only the right hand is used to eat with. Each diner takes off a piece of the stiff cornmeal paste and shapes it in the same palm and fingers into a ball. An indentation is made in the ball with the right thumb. The ball of paste is dipped into sauce and brought to the mouth.
- Breakfast: thin porridge of cornmeal or other staple, with or without ground peanuts.
- Lunch: cornmeal, accompaniment of vegetable stew with or without meat (if affordable).
- Dinner: same as lunch.
- Drinks: local orange squash (manufactured fruit drink), local beer (*chibuku*), international bottled soft drinks.

Fermented Millet Porridge (Amboli)

This is a common staple in some areas of Zimbabwe, served for breakfast or lunch.

2 cups millet flour (available from health food and specialty stores)
3 or more cups water
1 TBS fermented wheat flour (see Note, or substitute 2 TBS lemon juice added when porridge is cooked)
2 cups water
salt or sugar to taste
ground peanuts or chunky peanut butter

Whisk millet flour and water into a fine paste.
Stir in well-fermented wheat flour.
Leave for a day in a warm place, covered with a moist kitchen towel.
Boil 2 cups water.
Add the flour mixture to boiling water while stirring constantly to obtain a creamy porridge.
Add salt or sugar to taste. Add lemon juice, if not using fermented flour.
Cool slightly and serve. Pass ground peanuts or peanut butter for diners to add to porridge.
Note: To make fermented wheat flour, mix 1 tablespoon flour with body-temperature water to make a very thin slurry. Add 1 tablespoon yeast. Leave in warm, draft-free place for 15–20 minutes.

Chicken in Peanut Sauce (Huku ne Dovi)

This is a special dish made by the Shona, usually served for the evening or a celebratory meal. This is to be eaten with a cornmeal staple. Diners help themselves by dipping into the stew with a ball of stiff *sadza* (cornmeal paste). The root vegetables included depend on what is in season, and not all may be present in any one dish.

2 TBS oil
4 large portions chicken (2–3 pounds)
1 large onion, sliced
1 TBS fresh ginger, grated
2 large tomatoes, chopped fine
2 bell peppers, cored, seeded, sliced into thin strips
2 potatoes (sweet or white), peeled and cubed
2 carrots, peeled and cubed
2 turnips, peeled and cubed
salt, chili powder or dried chili flakes to taste
4 cups water
½ cup natural peanut butter
3 green onions, chopped

Heat oil and brown chicken pieces.
Stir in onion, frying until softened.
Add ginger, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, carrots, turnips, salt, and chili; fry for 2–3 minutes.
Stir in water; simmer for 40 minutes to 1 hour, or until chicken and vegetables are tender.
Mix peanut butter with ½ cup of simmering stock to make a slurry.
Add peanut slurry to pot; simmer for another 10 minutes.
Sprinkle with green onions.
Serve hot with cornmeal staple and cooked greens.

Cooked Greens Zimbabwe Style

Various greens are an important element in the daily diet for most Zimbabweans. They might include spinach, collard, young pumpkin shoots, or other edible leaves collected in the wild, such as young baobab leaves. Serve with *sadza* or other staple, and a meat dish if available. A variation is made with white cabbage without the peanut butter.

3 cups kale or collard greens, washed, hard ribs discarded, finely shredded (or substitute cabbage, fresh or defrosted frozen spinach, Chinese cabbage)
1 cup water
1 large tomato, peeled and chopped
5 green onions, sliced fine
3 TBS natural peanut butter
salt, pepper to taste

(*continued*)

Place greens in a saucepan with the water.
Bring to a boil and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 15–20 minutes, until greens are tender.
Drain greens; reserve liquid.
Return greens to medium heat; stir in tomato and onions.
Mix peanut butter with ¾ cup of the greens cooking liquid; stir into vegetables.
Cook until sauce thickens; add more reserved liquid if mixture is too thick.
Season to taste.
Serve hot.

Pumpkin with Peanut Sauce (Nhopi Dovi)

Nhopi Dovi is the name of this recipe in the Shona language. The Ndebele people also make a similar dish. This is eaten commonly as the main dish for lunch or dinner.

1 pound butternut squash, pumpkin (peeled and seeded), or zucchini, cubed
2 cups water
4 TBS natural peanut butter
salt

Add squash or pumpkin to boiling water; reduce heat and simmer until very tender, for about 20–25 minutes.
Drain, reserving cooking water and returning squash to pot.
Stir ¾ cup cooking water into the peanut butter; mix well until smooth.
Stir peanut butter mix into squash. Stir.
Season to taste and cook 5 minutes more to allow sauce to thicken.
Serve hot or cold as a separate dish to accompany cornmeal.

Nhopi Dovi *with Cornmeal* (Sadza)

Pumpkin with peanut sauce is sometimes mixed with cornmeal mush to make a one-dish meal.

2 cups water
1 cup cornmeal
1 cup *nhopi dovi*

Bring water to a simmer.
Slowly trickle in cornmeal, stirring constantly.
Cook until it forms a thick porridge.
Stir in *nhopi dovi* (mashed pumpkin and peanut mixture).
Continue to cook for 2–3 minutes more over low heat, until heated through.

Add up to ½ cup more of retained pumpkin cooking water if necessary. Serve on its own or with Zimbabwe-style greens.

Squash and Apple Soup

This is a European variant of squash stew. Serve as a first course for dinner, or as a light lunch with bread.

2 TBS oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 pound butternut squash, peeled and cubed, seeds discarded
1 cup peeled and cubed potatoes
2 apples, cored, peeled and cubed
¼ tsp turmeric powder
¼ tsp curry powder
¼ tsp cinnamon powder
1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
4 cups chicken stock
¼ tsp salt
1 bay leaf
¼ tsp chili flakes
2 green onions, green parts only, minced fine

Heat oil in a large pan over low heat; add onion and fry until soft.
Stir in squash, potatoes, apples, and spices; fry together for 2–3 minutes, mixing thoroughly.
Add the stock, salt, and bay leaf; cover and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat and simmer gently for 20–25 minutes until vegetables are tender.
Cool; puree soup in a blender until smooth.
Return to pot and reheat gently without letting it come to a boil.
Serve, garnished with chili flakes and green onions.

Zimbabwe Fruit Custard

This European-Zimbabwean dessert can be made with bananas, mango, apples or semi-ripe papaya according to season.

3 eggs, beaten
3 TBS sugar
a pinch of salt
2 cups cream
1 tsp vanilla extract
4 bananas, cut into 2-inch chunks
¼ cup soft brown sugar

Blend well the eggs, sugar, salt, cream, and vanilla.
Place bananas in a casserole or a deep pie dish.
Cover with custard.
Sprinkle with sugar; bake at 350°F for 20–25 minutes. (The middle will still be wobbly.)
Leave custard in oven to cool for about 10–15 minutes.
Serve warm or chilled.

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